



# EARL HAIG

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*WORKS BY ERNEST PROTHEROE*

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LORD KITCHENER

THE LIFE STORY OF EDITH  
CAVELL

THE DOMINION OF MAN

ETC., ETC.







EARL HAIG.

[*Topical Press.*]

*Frontispiece*

*Dist*

# EARL HAIG

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by

ERNEST PROTHEROE

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# EARL HAIG

## CHAPTER I

### A HAIG OF BEMERSYDE

DOUGLAS HAIG was of Fife parentage, and more remotely of Border descent. He was born on June 19, 1861, at 24, Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, the son of Mr. John Haig, of Cameron Bridge, and of Rachel, daughter of Mr. Hugh Veitch, of Stewartfield, Midlothian.

The boy, who was destined to become one of the greatest figures in his country, sprang from a race of fighters, for he was collaterally descended from the Haigs of Bemersyde whose pedigree had early Norman roots, and it has been claimed that the family was of even more venerable origin, dating back to the Picts. There are written records that Haigs were living on Tweedside before the thirteenth century, when Petrus de Haga (1150-1200) was the head of the family, who died when William the Lion was on the throne. A de Haga enlisted under Richard I for the Third Crusade.

Even at that early date the Haigs were established at Bemersyde, and it was their reputation for stability and holding their own that led Thomas the Rhymer (Ercildoun) to pen a prophecy :

“Tyde what may betyde,  
Haig shall be Haig of Bemersyde.”

Haigs fought at Bannockburn (1314) and shared in the glory of leaving 30,000 English dead on the stricken field. They

fought against the English in other later battles, notably in 1513 on "Flodden's fatal field, where shivered was fair Scotland's spear, and broken was her shield."

James Haig (1602-19), one of the most turbulent members of the family, accused his younger brother, William, of causing the death of Prince Henry, son of James VI of Scotland, who succeeded to the English throne as James I on the death of Queen Elizabeth. James Haig challenged his brother to mortal combat, but the latter's innocence was proved by less violent means, whereupon James departed from Scotland, and left William in possession of the estate.

William Haig (1627-36), who was Solicitor-General and Collector of the Burgh taxes, drew up the famous "Supplication" to Charles I on behalf of the Scots Estates against the domination of the Episcopal faction. The result was his denouncement as a traitor, necessitating his flight to Holland, where he died in 1639.

The twenty-first Laird of Bemersyde was Anthony Haig (1654-1712), who came under the influence of George Fox, and for five years was a prisoner in the Tolbooth for his ardent Quakerism. In his later years the Laird, if he did not cease to be a Quaker, did not parade it, and devoted his energies to improving the estate.

Another noted Laird of Bemersyde in the eighteenth century was James Anthony Haig (1732-90), who espoused the Jacobite cause with great fervour, going to the length of endeavouring to raise a regiment of Haigs in support of the Young Pretender, the son of James II. Although the Jacobites met with a success at Prestonpans, they were utterly routed at Culloden (1746). So hard pressed was the Young Pretender that it took him five months to effect his escape from Scotland, which was due to the devotion of the heroic Flora MacDonald—and with him went the last hope of restoring the Stuart dynasty in England.

James Zerubabel Haig (1790-1840) spent some years in France, immediately preceding the Revolution. In a diary, some parts of which have been published, he vividly recorded life at the Court of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, and pictured the fashionable gaieties at Paris and Versailles.

Douglas Haig, although descended from the foregoing Berwickshire worthies, belonged to the Clackmannanshire branch of the Haig family that originated with Robert Haig, second son of the seventeenth Laird of Bemersyde, settling on the Thorsk estate of the Earl of Mar in Stirlingshire in 1627, and from there his descendants spread into the counties of Clackmannan and Fife.

William Haig of Kincaple, born in 1771, had a son, Hugh Veitch Haig of Cameron Bridge, Fifeshire, who was the grandfather of Douglas Haig. The wife of this ancestor was the widow of Major Foote Morrison of Greenfield, and their children were two sons and two daughters. One son, John, espoused Miss Rachel Veitch, as stated earlier, and the couple became the parents of Douglas Haig.

The birth of the young Scot elicited no sign from the auguries that he was fated to be anything out of the common, and not much is known of his early days. The boyhood of great men rarely gives a reliable indication of their future careers, else Haig might have become a sailor or an engineer, for he was fond of boats and was keenly interested in machinery.

Of the boyhood of another great man we know scarcely more than that he was the "fool of the family," who scared his little community by climbing a church steeple at the risk of a broken neck, and who was despatched to the East by his despairing progenitors, who were glad to get rid of him. Such was the inauspicious beginning of Robert Clive, who afterwards enriched the British Crown with its brightest jewel, India. He achieved fame in the building of the Empire, and it would be the lot of



Away," there is written, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God." This is a curious comment for one of yet tender years. It seems to be tangible evidence that the boy was father of the man, for one can easier think of Douglas Haig saying it to himself when he trod the Via Dolorosa in those fateful years in France, than expressing the thought when he was a mere boy.

He passed to Clifton Bank Boys' School, St. Andrews, where he was described as "a sturdy, muscular, fresh-faced Scottish laddie, the strongest and most athletic boy in the school, a terror to the bullies, and the champion of the smaller boys, who adored him for his kindly services and his prowess at Rugger and other games.

At the age of sixteen he entered Clifton College. He was good as a scholar and as an athlete. At the end of 1877 he was top of the examination list in Latin, with a special note that his "Ovid" was "very good." He gained his football cap in token that he was not lacking in vigour.

When he left Clifton for Brasenose College, Oxford, although he did not shirk his studies, he was better known for his athletic skill than for any academic achievements. He was a capable oarsman and lent a very useful hand in college boat races. His father rented a shooting lodge for a number of years and his son was a good shot, and he could "put up a gey guid stane" at curling. He was a fine horseman and shone at polo. In the Inter-Universities match of 1882 he gave Oxford the lead with a capital goal, but the game went to Cambridge by three goals to two. The match was interesting from the fact that it was the last in which there were five players on each side.

From Oxford, Haig passed to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and not directly into the Army, as is the custom nowadays. One of his contemporaries was the late General Walter Congreve, V.C., of South African fame. They shared the same room, and Congreve used to relate how his studymate

not only listened to the instruction, but wrote out notes every day, which was an exhibition of zeal not common to cadets.

As a boy he had not lacked thoroughness in whatever he undertook, but that quality now appeared to become almost an obsession in making himself master of his chosen profession. Industry is the birthright of the Lowland Scot ; heredity doubtless was a factor ; and in addition he was a little older than his fellows, caused by his delay at Oxford. Only shortly after his entrance into Sandhurst, a visitor asked one of the officers if any cadets appeared to stand out above their fellows. " There is one," was the reply. " Douglas Haig, a Scottish lad, is top of everything—books, drill, sports, and games. He is to go into the cavalry, and before he is finished, he will be top of the Army."

He passed first out of Sandhurst, which won for him the coveted prize of the Anson Memorial Sword—the cadet under-officers' sword of honour. With that early mark of distinction, he was commissioned in the 7th Hussars, who went to India in the autumn of 1886. In those days the cavalry did not take soldiering too seriously, and if an officer desired to make himself a glutton for work, his fellows willingly allowed him to perform his own duties ; and if he shouldered more than his fair share of responsibility, it was his own concern, and not a matter to disturb their own tranquillity.

The new subaltern's determination to get on with his job won for him the title of " von Haig," the cognomen being a friendly recognition of his punctilious attention to duty. When he was appointed president of the regimental coffee-shop, he promptly went down to the markets to make new contracts, with the result that prices were reduced by fifty per cent. It was but a trifle in his work, but it was symptomatic of his attention to detail, an interesting pointer to the character of the man who was bent upon learning the whole alphabet of his calling.

The 7th Hussars were in the very front rank as a polo regiment, but Haig was included in the team from his very first year, and he was one of the brilliant side that swept the board of Indian tournaments in 1889 and 1890. It was all in keeping with his character that he was as keen a sportsman as he was a zealous and efficient regimental officer.

After three years' service Haig became adjutant of his regiment, and in 1891 was appointed captain. He was not satisfied with merely performing his regimental duties in the most proficient manner; he spent his long leaves in studying military conditions in France and Germany. He spoke French most fluently and was making himself equally expert in German. He recorded his impressions of Germany in a letter to Sir Evelyn Wood, who was then one of our most experienced campaigners. Sir Evelyn was greatly struck by the prophetic knowledge displayed by Captain Haig, and was convinced that a young soldier, blessed with such foresight and professional acumen, would rise to the highest rank. Although Sir Evelyn Wood was then 76, he lived to see his belief in Haig verified to the very fullest extent.

Two years later Captain Haig was selected to be A.D.C. to the Inspector-General of Cavalry, which entailed his return from India to England. He held the office for a year, during which he studied hard to qualify for entrance into the Staff College. He passed the examination for admission with distinction, only to find himself rejected in the medical examination on account of colour blindness. It was a terribly disconcerting blow. For the moment the portals to his ambition were closed; but after consultations with oculists and specialists, he was granted an interview with the Duke of Cambridge, who had sufficient prescience to make an exception and give him a nomination. The Duke, who was then 75 and had been Commander-in-Chief of the British Army for nearly forty years, may have been blessed with prophetic vision

in straining a point in favour of the one who would rise to his own great rank, and in dust, blood, maiming, and in agony would nobly justify his selection.

Haig entered Camberley in 1895. In the same class was Captain Edmund Allenby, and a step above him was Captain Herbert Lawrence, his future Chief of General Staff. Haig speedily made his mark, for only in his second year, Colonel G. F. R. Henderson observed to some of the students: "There is a fellow in your batch who one of these days will be Commander-in-Chief." He paused for a moment, and then added, "Haig."

Brigadier-General Edmonds, the official military historian, testifies that he heard the remark, little dreaming that he would live to see Haig become the leader of the greatest army the world had ever seen take the field.

After completing his course in December, 1897, Captain Douglas Haig was attached to the Egyptian Army, which had been making military history for fifteen years, and in that new arena he would be presented with opportunities to prove his professional genius and courage.

## CHAPTER II

### IN DESERT AND VELDT

A REBELLION broke out in Egypt in June, 1882, and Arabi Pasha snatched the reigns of government out of the weak hands of the Khedive. This upheaval necessitated prompt British intervention in order to preserve the safety of the Suez Canal, that vital link in our route to India and the far East.

Our operations were swift and up to a point very effective. A British squadron bombarded the forts at Alexandria ; and at Tel-el-Kebir the rebel army was pulverised by Sir Garnet Wolseley. A little later Arabi, the stormy petrel of Egyptian politics, was a prisoner and was banished to Ceylon.

The ancient kingdom was saved from internal disruption and the Suez Canal was no longer in danger ; but meantime the Mahdi had preached a holy war in the Sudan, and the southern provinces of Egypt were at the mercy of the Dervishes. In opposition to British official advice, the Khedive sent forth an army, ten thousand strong, under Hicks Pasha and a number of other British officers. The army went out—and never returned. At El Obeid a horde of desert fanatics wiped it out except for a handful of trembling Egyptians, who saved their lives by joining the enemy. Not a single British officer was left to tell the mournful story.

General Gordon undertook the withdrawal of the Egyptian garrison from Khartum, only to find himself penned in by the Mahdists. An expedition to relieve him arrived a day too late. Gordon had kept his lonely vigil with heroic fortitude, until the

city was overwhelmed and the bleeding head of the Christian hero was flung at the feet of the victorious Mahdi.

Egypt was now in greater peril than ever, and Britain perforce had to remain in occupation until the faint-hearted, terribly ineffective native army could be drilled into a reliable fighting machine that would stand up to the Dervishes, now led by the Khalifa, who came into power on the death of the Mahdi. The situation was fraught with almost insuperable obstacles. The Dervishes were born fighters, determined to overrun Egypt; they were inspired by demoniacal hatred of the Christians whom they vowed to drive into the sea—and they were backed up by the formidable desert, that made transport a matter of almost unimaginable difficulty.

Under Sir Evelyn Wood and Sir Francis Grenfell, who held the office of Sirdar in turn, the Egyptian Army began to find its feet—and its soul; and in 1892 there came into power Colonel Horatio Kitchener, who put the seal upon the work of his predecessors by intensifying the training of the native army, and by constructing a desert railway, that was the deadliest weapon ever forged against the Khalifa and his hateful rule.

In 1896 the Sirdar struck the Dervishes the first really serious blow by driving them out of the province of Dongola; and another year's hard work culminated in the occupation of Berber. Kitchener was ready to take another big stride southwards in the early part of 1898, and it was at that critical juncture when Captain Douglas Haig joined Kitchener's staff, burning with zeal to put into practice in actual warfare the theories he had patiently studied in peace.

Wherever Haig went he drew attention to himself on account of his zeal and thoroughness, and in the desert he speedily gave his men an example of his implicit obedience to orders. He had been instructed to capture a score of Arabs. By the time he had rounded up nineteen of them, his men were worn out, and it was suggested that the missing Arab was not worth further exertion.

Captain Haig's reply was prompt and emphatic: "I will have him if I have to chase him for a hundred miles. I was ordered to account for twenty men, not nineteen."

The Dervishes still so little realised the assistance the railway rendered in rapid concentration, that Mahmud, the Khalifa's most trusted Emir, was marching northwards, bent upon recapturing Berber.

Mahmud found that, thanks to the railway, his path was blocked by a strong Anglo-Egyptian force at El Aliab. Berber could only be attacked by making a big detour, and Mahmud reached Nakheila, on the River Atbara, by a wonderful single march of forty miles through a waterless region. The next stage was only possible by making use of some water-wells about midway, but to Mahmud's intense disgust, he learnt that Kitchener had anticipated his move by holding the wells himself.

Greatly irritated, Mahmud decided to dig himself in. He was expecting his surplus supplies to arrive from Shendi, but again Kitchener stepped in, and the stores found their way into the Anglo-Egyptian lines. Six hundred Dervish women and many children were captured at the same time, which caused many warriors to see the writing on the wall, and they stole away from their badly disgruntled leader. Mahmud was openly quarrelling with Osman Digna, who led the Dervish horse; food was getting scarce; and desertion was rife—and the Anglo-Egyptian Army was only nineteen miles away.

Unwinking miles of desert, remember. Weary miles that had to be slogged ankle deep in sand, or over jagged flints that cut boots to pieces. The heat in the daytime was generally 115 degrees.

Having left railhead seventeen miles behind him, Kitchener's force depended for rations upon slow camel transport. Hence he was anxious for there to be no delay in his operations, and on

April 4 he moved five miles nearer Mahmud. Colonel Broadwood, a day later, in a cavalry reconnaissance to within 1,200 yards of Mahmud's zeriba, had to fight his way back against 1,500 Dervish infantry and horse. Captain Haig had volunteered to reconnoitre the zeriba, and rode close up before a hail of bullets disclosed the presence of the enemy. It was said that his very imperturbability disturbed the enemy's aim and resulted in his almost miraculous escape. In this spying out of the enemy position seven men were killed and ten wounded, which was not a very stiff price for the valuable information that was gained.

On the 6th Kitchener marched to Umdabia and was then only five miles from the foe. That same night the brigades crept forward under cover of darkness and in the heat of a breathless oven. At nine o'clock there was a halt for biscuits and bully beef and three hours' sleep. Another push forward and another sleep, with the enemy's watch-fires gleaming only half a mile away.

At dawn on Good Friday morning, April 8, the Anglo-Egyptian force from the edge of a low ridge looked down on Mahmud's zeriba that they had been dreaming about. It was a barricade of mimosa thorn, ten feet thick and twenty feet high, and having a circumference of about three miles. It was open at the back to provide a line of retreat. Within this prickly barrier there was a palisaded stockade and a trench, the whole interior consisting of a medley of mounds and rifle-pits.

After plying the zeriba with shells and rockets for two hours the Anglo-Egyptians swept forward, heartened by fifes, drums, the skirling of bagpipes and the weird music of native bands. Under a storm of bullets the Camerons led the way, General Gatacre himself being the first to begin tearing down with his hands the thorn fence in which the artillery had made considerable gaps. The Egyptians and loyal Sudanese regiments were splendid. Quickly the whole zeriba was a pandemonium of



shooting, hacking, and stabbing, as the attackers swept over the trenches and holes that were filled with enemy rifle and spearmen.

Mahmud had a thousand picked riflemen in an inner citadel. They wiped out one company of Sudanese, but the Lincolns and Camerons would not be denied, and the citadel was overwhelmed and Mahmud himself was taken captive.

Osman Digna got away with the Baggara horse, but higher up the Atbara he was intercepted and lost 300 killed and 450 wounded. The wily Emir saved his own worthless skin by escaping on a bare-backed horse.

The Dervish losses were 3,000 killed, and some hundreds, mostly negroes, were taken prisoner. The British contingent lost 3 officers and 21 men killed, 10 officers and 90 men wounded; the Egyptian forces had 5 officers wounded, and 56 men were killed and 370 wounded.

Kitchener, generally supposed to be an unemotional machine, was openly delighted at the victory, and greatly moved by the manner in which the Egyptian Army had gallantly proved its mettle; and the Egyptians themselves were filled with pride at having emulated their white brethren in proof that their training had not been in vain.

It took four months to prepare for the next advance, an intensely busy period for Captain Douglas Haig, who was prepared to give the best that was in him in support of that strong leader, who demanded efficiency and was merciless in seeing that he got it.

When the Khalifa had got over the shock of Mahmud's debacle at Atbara, he proposed to march 170 miles northwards to teach Kitchener a lesson, and restore the star of Islam to its former effulgency. On second thoughts he decided to remain at Omdurman with his 50,000 men, and await the coming of the daring Briton, if he had the temerity to dish up a world of trouble for himself. The Khalifa had yet to learn that

Kitchener's coming was as assured as was the daily blazing sun-bath of the desert void.

The Sirdar left Atbara on August 13, and in a week's time, partly by marching and partly by river transport, concentrated at Shabluka, not sixty miles from Omdurman ; and the last day of the month saw the Anglo-Egyptian Army only separated by the Kerreri Hills from the Khalifa and his host.

Kitchener offered to treat the Khalifa and his Emirs with justice and consideration if they would surrender and save further bloodshed ; but Abdullah had promised his army that the bones of the infidels should whiten the desert ; and even although his own craven heart now trembled, he dared not brook the anger of his fanatical followers that would burst upon his own head if he capitulated.

The battle was an epic of desert warfare. Never was an army so stricken as was the Khalifa's. His casualties—11,000 killed, 16,000 wounded, and 40,000 taken prisoner—testified to the fanatical courage that inspired a hopeless resistance of five hours ; and equally they were proof of the solidity and courage of the victors. That the British soldiers would uphold their own glorious traditions was a foregone conclusion, but the Egyptians had come through the ordeal brilliantly, in further testimony that British training had converted the former weak-kneed fellaheen into a magnificent fighting machine.

The Anglo-Egyptian losses were only 2 officers killed and 23 wounded, and of the rank and file 43 were killed and about 400 wounded. The heaviest casualties were among the Camerons and 21st Lancers, the latter suffering severely in the course of a famous charge.

The Khalifa escaped, but on November 24 he was rounded up by Sir Reginald Wingate near the wells of Gedid. This time Abdullah and several of his Emirs were slain—and the long struggle was at an end, and a vast territory was freed from hideous oppression and unspeakable cruelty.

Although Haig's period of active service was short, he did not fail to gain the personal notice of Kitchener. He was mentioned in despatches; he received the British medal for the campaign, and the Khedive's medal with two clasps. He returned home with the brevet rank of major. A few months later he was Brigade-Major of the Cavalry Brigade at Aldershot, then under the command of General French, with whom he went in the latter part of 1899 to South Africa, where trouble was brewing with the Boers.

Ever since Cape Colony was ceded to Britain in 1814, the Boers, who were the original white settlers, had never ceased to exhibit their resentment. They left Cape Colony and established themselves in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, which in the course of time became entirely surrounded by the growing British territory. War broke out in 1880, but when British arms had met with several reverses, notably at Majuba Hill, peace was made and the two Boer States were declared independent.

The discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand region in 1885 caused a great influx of adventurers, mostly British, who speedily outnumbered the Boers, especially in Johannesburg, an incredibly rich city of wonderful mushroom growth with a population of 100,000. The "Outlanders," as the Boers termed the other white settlers, brought great wealth to the State, but they were denied any voice in the government of the country. The Outlanders attempted to redress their wrongs by a raid with the object of seizing Johannesburg; but the rising resulted in failure, and during the next three years the Boers became still more exacting. Matters speedily went from bad to worse, and on October 12, 1899, the Transvaal and Orange Free State declared war on Cape Colony and Natal. There were but few British troops on the spot; our base was 6,000 miles away; and as the Boers had been storing arms and ammunition for years, they had a tremendous initial

advantage, which enabled them within twenty-four hours to invade Natal, and in the west they invested Kimberley and Mafeking.

It was Major Haig's luck to be on the scene and to be one of General French's right-hand men. In Natal the Boers were soundly defeated at Dundee, but General Penn Symons was mortally wounded and our losses were 474 killed, wounded, and captured.

General French scattered the Boers at Elandslaagte after a twelve-hour march and half an hour's desperate attack. Several rocky ridges had to be surmounted before coming to grips with the enemy, who swept the intervening spaces with "death-piping bullets that beat on the boulders like a million hammers and tore the turf like a harrow." By the time the last ridge was crossed, half the British officers were down; the men puffed but stumbled on. The hill was sown with bleeding and dead behind; it was edged with stinging fire in front. Let G. W. Steevens, prince of war correspondents, tell the story:

"Fix bayonets. Staff officers rushed shouting from the rear, imploring, cajoling, cursing, slamming every man who could move into the line. Line—but it was a line no longer. It was a surging wave of men—Devons and Gordons, Manchester and Light Horse, all mixed, inextricably; subalterns commanding regiments, soldiers yelling advice, officers firing carbines, stumbling, leaping, killing, falling, all drunk with battle, shoving through hell to the throat of the enemy. And there beneath our feet was the Boer camp and the last Boers galloping out of it. There also—thank Heaven! thank Heaven! were squadrons of Lancers and Dragoon Guards storming in among them, shouting, spearing, stamping them into the ground. Cease fire! Half an hour crammed with the life of half a lifetime."

For their defeats at Dundee and Elandslaagte the Boers took their revenge at Nicholson's Nek only about a week later, when they nearly annihilated a British force 1,200 strong.

Sir George White, who was in command at Ladysmith, was forced to retire from Farquhar's Farm, and early in November Ladysmith would have fallen to the attack of 20,000 Boers but for the timely arrival of a naval brigade with two 4.7 inch guns for which Captain Percy Scott of H.M.S. *Terrible* had furnished some special field mountings. The Boers had been attacking the town with Long Toms capable of throwing a 96-lb. shell a distance of 12,000 yards, to which the garrison could reply with only light field-guns throwing a 15-lb. shell 6,000 yards. The two naval weapons made all the difference, and Sir George White settled down to the task of defence until British reinforcements could come to his relief.

General Buller reached the Cape on October 30, with an army corps of 40,000 men and 114 guns. It was expected that the Boers would submit in face of such a force, but nothing was further from their thoughts. Lord Methuen in attempting to relieve Kimberley nearly lost his Highland brigade at Magersfontein; Gatacre in an advance upon Stormberg lost 720 men and a couple of guns; and Buller himself on the way to Ladysmith suffered a crushing defeat at Colenso, in which he lost 1,100 men and 11 guns.

The Boers were proving themselves to be the finest irregular troops in the world; they had a perfect knowledge of the difficult country; and the non-combatant population supplied them with intelligence of which their astute generals took fullest advantage.

Realising the seriousness of the situation, the British Government sent out four complete divisions of regulars, about a thousand each of yeomanry and volunteers; twelve thousand Canadians and Australians; and twenty thousand

Cape and Natal volunteers were added to the strength. Lord Roberts, the beloved "Bobs," was appointed to the command with Lord Kitchener of Khartum as Chief of his Staff.

Lord Roberts commenced his campaign on February 12, 1900. On the third day General French with a cavalry force made a dash for Kimberley and relieved it; Cronje, a noted Boer leader, was brought to bay at Paardeberg, and after enduring a terrible bombardment surrendered on February 27; and a day later Buller relieved Ladysmith. In the second week of March Roberts entered Bloemfontein, the capital of Orange Free State, and on March 18 Colonel Mahon relieved Mafeking, where Baden-Powell had kept the flag flying for 200 days. On June 5, the British flag was flying over Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal. Three months later Lord Roberts informed the Government that, "nothing is now left of the Boer Army but a few marauding bands," and he returned home, leaving Lord Kitchener to clear up the war.

A great deal had been crowded into Haig's eight months of active service in the Sudan, but the desert warfare was comparatively a period of restful repose compared to the strenuous life he spent on the veldt in a similarly brief space of time.

He was staff officer to General French at Elandslaagte, Rietfontein, and Lombard's Kop, and they narrowly escaped being locked up in Ladysmith, which they left by the last train that got through before the town was invested.

Proceeding to Cape Colony, Haig was with French in the operations around Colesberg. When Lord Roberts arrived, the Cavalry Division gradually assembled near the Modder River, and Haig was acting as French's A.D.C. when the great advance into Orange Free State took place. Then followed the relief of Kimberley, the battle of Paardeberg, actions at Diamond Hill and Driefontein, and the advance

to Johannesburg and Pretoria—and constantly Haig proved his efficiency as a staff officer.

Although Lord Roberts had gone home, it was an illusion that the war was at an end, for a number of Boer commandos kept up an irritating guerilla warfare for two years, their remarkable mobility making them most difficult to overcome.

In the latter part of 1900 Haig was in command of two columns that were operating in the Orange River Colony, but in 1901, as a column controller subordinate to Sir John French, he was transferred to Cape Colony to check the activities of some Boer commandos that had crossed the Orange River. Haig's force consisted of a number of small mobile bodies, that were chiefly engaged against the detached parties of the enemy under General Smuts who haunted the region of the Great Karoo and towards Namaqualand. If the Boers could claim that Haig never inflicted upon them any disastrous reverse, he certainly never gave them any rest, although his columns for several months were hampered by lack of transport. At length, however, the Boer leaders came to Pretoria to discuss terms with Lord Milner and Lord Kitchener, and eventually peace was signed on May 31, 1902.

General Botha, most famous of Boer leaders, voiced a magnanimous hope. He said: "Let the Blood of the Brave who found their graves in South Africa be the cement now to bind us together."

During the protracted operations a number of escapes upon different occasions won for the dashing cavalry officer the title, "Lucky Haig." Horses were shot under him and shells burst near him, but he was left unscathed. At Paardeberg he was thrown from his horse when crossing the Modder River, and a brother officer was able to give a helping hand only just in the nick of time.

Haig won a name in South Africa. He had much of the temperament of Kitchener; he liked action better than words;

## CHAPTER III

### THE RUNGS OF THE LADDER

THE South African War marked a new era in military operations. The Boers in the field had never numbered more than 50,000 men, and yet it had taken forces totalling nearly half a million to overcome them. The enemy was an army of mounted men; they employed guns of a calibre that in the past had not been considered practicable in the field; they resorted to intricate entrenchments and shelters; and they utilised barbed wire for protective entanglements.

The war cost us 22,550 lives and 6,000 men invalided out of the service; and the footing of the bill in sterling called for no less than £200,000,000. It was considered to be a staggering war expenditure with which to begin the twentieth century. Little did we dream that before many more years had passed over our heads, we should be spending millions of pounds a day in a war that would cost us a stupendous total of £13,578,000,000, together with the appalling casualties of nearly a million men killed and more than two million wounded.

Although Colonel Haig had been appointed to the command of the 17th Lancers—"The Death or Glory Boys"—in 1901, he did not serve regimentally until his return home after the conclusion of the war.

He was "Lucky Haig" in more than his escapes from death in the field. It was very apparent that he was the favourite of fortune in the combination of circumstances that had given



him rapidly succeeding opportunities to win distinction; and now in his short spell of home service he won the personal regard of King Edward.

While Haig was in the Sudan and South Africa, he had no chance of indulging in his partiality for polo, but he resumed the game when he was with the 17th Lancers and showed that he had lost little of his skill; and his new regiment won the first Inter-Regimental to be played after the war.

In 1903 Colonel Haig went to India as Inspector-General of Cavalry, which brought him again into association with Lord Kitchener of Khartum, who was Commander-in-Chief in India from the end of 1902 until the autumn of 1909. Kitchener had made a direct application for the appointment of Haig. It was an unusual step in advancement for only a brevet-colonel, but in the next year he became major-general, which was a still more astonishing rise for a man no older than forty-two, and who had only entered the Army at the age of twenty-three.

Lord Kitchener had a scheme in view that would change some features of the Indian Army almost out of recognition. Needless to say that in the new Inspector-General of Cavalry he would have a henchman who would lend him the same loyal support as he had done in the Sudan and South Africa.

It was an amazing thing that neither Roberts, Lockhart, nor White, the last three to hold the office of Commander-in-Chief, had seen fit to tackle the distribution of the Army in India, which had remained unchanged for forty years, although the general condition of the country had altered enormously. In the old days Bengal, Madras, and Bombay each had its own separate army; regiments were dumped down apparently anywhere; in some cases they were even divided, and the respective halves were comparative strangers to each other. Transport nearly everywhere was a difficult operation.

The armies of the three presidencies had long been merged

into one and the country was a network of railways. Yet the Army was still divided up in readiness for suppressing any possible mutiny, which railway transport with its powers of rapid concentration had practically rendered an impossibility. It was Kitchener's opinion that any internal troubles were a matter for the police administration, leaving the Army to deal with the ever-present menace on the north-west frontier.

It was there that Kitchener located the greater part of the Indian garrison, dividing it up into a number of small armies, each complete in itself, under a general capable of initiative and accustomed to responsibility. That great work of transformation was Kitchener's own task, but from it Haig would undoubtedly learn a great deal in matters of organisation that would be invaluable in his further career.

It was whilst on leave from India in 1905, that Major-General Haig married the Hon. Dorothy Maud Vivian, daughter of the third Lord Vivian. She and her twin sister, the Hon. Violet Vivian, were appointed Maids of Honour to Queen Alexandra immediately after the accession of King Edward. The Hon. Dorothy Vivian had held the post four years when she met Major-General Haig. Queen Alexandra delighted in furthering a love-match. The couple met at the Windsor Castle party for Ascot, and the courtship and marriage covered little more than a month.

Another of Queen Alexandra's Maids of Honour, the Hon. Mary Hart Dyke, became engaged to Captain Matthew Bell of the Life Guards; and the Queen practically insisted upon a double wedding in the private chapel at Buckingham Palace—the first time the chapel had been used for a non-royal ceremony. The register was signed by King Edward and Queen Alexandra. Their Majesties gave the brides and bridegrooms and their families a wedding breakfast in the Palace, the King presiding at one table and the Queen at the

other. Never before had any member of the Court been accorded such an honour.

Queen Alexandra afterwards wrote of Major-General Haig and his bride that they were "ideally suited to each other," and the marriage did indeed prove to be one of intense felicity and mutual devotion.

Having his marriage celebrated almost like a royal one did not cause the Major-General to deviate a jot from the assiduous pursuit of his military profession; there was no room in his life for self-assertion and self-glory; he was innately modest, with "Service" for his motto; and on the expiration of his leave, he returned to India to resume his duties with his accustomed zeal.

In 1905 the organisation of the Army at home was being recast, which resulted in the creation of the General Staff. It has since been revealed by Lord Esher, who presided over the committee dealing with that vital matter, in what high esteem Major-General Haig was held in high quarters. Lord Esher said:

"The personality of Major-General Haig, then only forty-four years old, and very junior in the Army, had so impressed itself upon the British Government that there was a wish to appoint him as Chief of the General Staff, making the appointment practically permanent, as was the custom of the German Army. But the prejudices of seniority and rank were too great, and an older officer was named."

It was said of Haig's régime that it "was like an east wind, bracing but severe. He set a hard standard both in training and conditions, conducting Staff rides and exercises under conditions as near as possible to the reality of war as he conceived it." It was undeniable that he developed the efficiency of the cavalry, but professional critics maintained that some of his theories were discounted by modern facts, and that he appeared to fail to realise that modern weapons had rendered

impossible the cavalry charge in the old traditional style; and to revive it in some other form entailed finding a substitute for the exceedingly vulnerable horse. It would have been more to the point if the criticism had been more constructive, but the time was coming when the substitute would be found in a surprising form that would make hay of much that had been the practice in the past.

Haig's service in India as Inspector-General of Cavalry came to an end in 1906, and he returned to England to become Director of Military Training. Shortly afterwards was published his book, "Cavalry Studies: Strategical and Tactical." He held the post of Director of Staff Duties at the War Office in 1907-8, during which time he received the honour of K.C.V.O.

There was more than met the eye in Major-General Haig's spell of three years at the War Office. He had been specially recalled from India by Mr. Haldane, the Secretary of State for War, in order to utilise his services in putting the Army on a footing that would meet the necessities of modern war—war in Europe, which would be very different from fighting fanatical but ill-armed Dervishes, or Boer farmers, no matter how expert horsemen or deadly sharpshooters. Lord Haldane, nearly twenty years later, in a speech in the House of Lords, placed on record how invaluable were Major-General Haig's services in that great work of Army reorganisation. He said: "The year 1906 was a perilous one for the British nation. Armaments had been and were being piled up on the Continent to such a height that it looked as though they must come down with a disastrous clash. We were doing all we could to keep the peace with Germany, but, although perhaps the leaders of German political opinion did not want war, there was a powerful military element in Germany which thought that the hour had struck for Germany to assert her greatness. They had an army which, for magnitude and

perfection of organisation, was the greatest in the world. They were laying the foundation of a fleet which, so far as its size allowed it to go, was of the highest training and efficiency. We could not tell, desirous as we were to avert every pretext of strife, when a conflagration might not break out.

“In those circumstances the problem in 1906 was how to deal with that, if it arose. We knew that Germany could not, in face of our magnificent and superior fleet, invade this country directly. We knew them too well to think that they were likely to try it. But they had other means. If they could get possession of the northern ports of France—Calais, Dunkirk, and Boulogne—with long-range guns, with submarines, and with their fleet, they might make the position of this country a very precarious one in point of safety. That problem had to be thought out, and, after surveying the whole Army, I took it upon myself to ask Major-General Haig, who was then in India, to come to this country and think for us. He seemed to be, from all I could discover, even then the most highly-equipped thinker in the British Army. He came here, and it was my privilege to work with him and take instructions from him. He had a singularly lucid mind, the most modest of demeanours, but none the less, when he had formed a conclusion he was both resolute and courageous.

“He worked out the details of the Expeditionary Force, and then took up the Territorial Force. At first he wished to organise the latter in 28 divisions, but it proved impossible to adopt so large a strength, because we could not raise the numbers, or distribute them when raised in the right parts of the United Kingdom. Ultimately 14 divisions constituted its strength, fashioned into a shape that was perfect, so far as it went. He also took in hand the staff work and other things that were necessary. He did more than that; he had come

back to a position on the new General Staff which had been called into being just before he arrived. And he conceived the idea that the principles of the General Staff might be extended far beyond Great Britain, so as to be acceptable to the Dominions and to India. A plan was worked out, largely by himself, for that purpose ; and through the Colonial Office and at the conference which took place with Dominion Premiers, it was communicated and adopted, and the result was that the General Staff became the Imperial General Staff—no longer a local organisation, but part of the military equipment of the Empire.”

The foregoing is Lord Haldane’s testimony to Sir Douglas Haig’s professional skill of the highest order, and his ability to get the best out of those serving under him.

Similarly the soldier formed a high opinion of the statesman’s prescience and the splendid manner in which he lent all the sympathy and aid of which a layman was capable in furthering the task in hand—and in a later page it will be shown how Haig, in that direct manner that was all his own, demonstrated how greatly he had appreciated Lord Haldane’s foresight and assistance in their great and common task.

Having completed the great task that had been assigned to him, Haig went back to India in 1909 as Chief of the General Staff. He was reluctant to go, because he was convinced that war with Germany was inevitable, and, more than that, it was imminent, and if trouble burst upon us he desired to be on hand.

Although Lord Kitchener had now left India, “ one of his young men ” was there to help give effect to the reforms he had introduced, and also to carry out his own ideas in the light of the recent decisions at the War Office. The task was accomplished with the thoroughness and smoothness that characterised his methods of work. Sir Douglas Haig returned to England

in 1912, having in the meantime been promoted to Lieut.-General and been awarded the K.C.I.E.

We had now got to the stage of having to train the troops up to the high standard that had been laid down by Sir Douglas Haig ; and for that purpose he became General Officer commanding Aldershot, having under him two Divisions of the Expeditionary Force, in which from the first it had been intended for him to have High Command. In consultation with Sir John French, Haig brought the two Divisions at Aldershot to such a high state of efficiency and quality that they became an example to the other four Divisions of the Expeditionary Force. In addition, there was spread something of the same spirit among the Territorial troops.

During the two strenuous years spent in proving himself an exceptionally capable trainer of troops in the field, a K.C.B. was bestowed upon Haig in 1913, and in 1914 he was appointed General in recognition of his distinguished record.

The time had now arrived when the likelihood of war ceased to be a matter for academic discussion—it was a stark reality, that came upon us almost with the suddenness of a bolt out of an apparently clear sky.

For years the Kaiser, the self-styled “ War Lord of Europe,” had rattled the scabbard ; he had declared upon different occasions that nothing must happen in any part of the world without his leave ; there was only one law and that was the law he lay down ; the trident must be in his fist ; and as the nineteenth century saw a German Empire, so the twentieth must see a German world.

In many quarters these expressions were viewed as more or less irresponsible vapourings, but fortunately there were some Britons, blessed with vision, who realised the deadliness of purpose behind the theatrical bravado. The nation had no occasion to lose its sleep at night, for Lord Fisher had taken the precaution to see that the trident at least was in the right

fist, and, as has already been set forth, the Army had never before been in such a state of warlike preparedness.

There is no space for more than the briefest details. The assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne by two Serbian fanatics led to Austria bombarding Belgrade, although any knowledge of the plot was disclaimed by the Serbian Government, in whose support Russia ordered a general mobilisation. Even at that late stage the contending countries might have come to an amicable agreement through arbitration, but it was the Kaiser's opportunity to demonstrate the long-expounded doctrine of the mailed fist, and with characteristic impetuosity he flung himself into a quarrel that did not immediately concern him. On August 1, 1914, Germany declared war upon Russia and invaded Luxembourg, and a day later crossed the French frontier and sent an ultimatum to Belgium.

Whether Britain entered the fray yet hung in the balance. In 1839 the neutrality of Belgium had been guaranteed by a number of European Powers, three of the most important signatures being those of Britain, France and Prussia. Belgium's rights were now in peril, and Britain demanded from France and Germany pledges that they would honour their treaty signatures concerning the smaller country. France gave a ready undertaking, but Germany would do no more than promise compensation for any damage Belgium might suffer by a German army marching across her territory, nor should Belgium lose her independence after the war. As a sop to Britain to secure her neutrality, Germany undertook not to exact any territory from France in the event of German victory.

Britain had a plain duty to Belgium unless she was prepared to see the treaty of 1839 torn into tatters; and she had more than a sentimental interest in France, for if that country failed to withstand the onset of Germany, we should have



our greatest rival installed at our very doors to the imminent peril of our national security. The Kaiser was obdurate ; he had applied the torch to the powder magazine of Europe of set purpose.

On August 4, German troops assailed the Belgium fortress of Liège—and at midnight Britain declared war on Germany.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RALLY OF THE EMPIRE

SEVERAL times in the history of Europe when a king or emperor had sought to stamp his iron heel on the Continent preparatory to dictating to the whole world, Britain with her Navy and troops had intervened to prevent the tyrant from achieving his purpose. The last occasion was when Napoleon made a bid for world power, only to see his over-weening ambition staggered at the battle of Trafalgar, and shattered on the field of Waterloo.

Now the Kaiser, the royal bully *in excelsis*, had let loose the dogs of war with the certainty that there would be a most titanic struggle. At the very outset it embroiled Germany and Austria on the one side, and Great Britain, France, Belgium, Russia, and Serbia on the other, involving armies that totalled nearly 20,000,000 men. Before the war was a month old Japan added her navy to the Allies' shipping strength. In November Turkey threw in her lot with Germany, as did Bulgaria in the next year, while Italy made war on Austria.

Britain apparently was supreme on water, but compared to continental armies, her land forces were woefully inadequate. Our Regular Army consisted of 156,000 men, and the Reserves, 209,000. The Territorials numbered 251,000, but they would require months of training before being ready for the line of battle.

Lord Kitchener, who had been British Agent in Egypt since 1911, was paying a visit to England when war broke out,

and it was only natural that our greatest military organiser should be made Secretary of State for War in the time of our unexampled need.

It was popularly supposed that the war would last only a few months, but Lord Kitchener announced that he was preparing for a campaign of three years, and in clarion tones called for 100,000 men, and the old army was speedily increased by that number. He called again and again until he had got a million—and a second million. Like a military wizard he raised more and more men at home, to which were added never-ceasing drafts from the Colonies—and in May, 1916, the King was able to make the proud announcement that five million volunteers had joined the Colours. Not until that magnificent response was made was compulsory service put into force.

The Germans had failed to realise that the British Empire is not a political entity held together by brute force, but by the loyalty and devotion the Empire-building Briton inspires in the subject races, great and small. Germany anticipated some of our Colonies would seize upon the opportunity to make a bid for freedom: India would snap her shackles; the Boers would assuredly raise the flag of revolt—and we should have our hands too full elsewhere to permit us to lend much useful aid to France and Belgium.

The moment the Mother Country was assailed, men, money and food were promised from every quarter of the Empire; Indian potentates offered to dispose of even their jewels in order to raise funds; and South Africa, in addition to emulating Canada, Australia, and New Zealand in sending an Expeditionary Force to France, would make war on German South-West Africa.

Field-Marshal Sir John French was in command of the British Expeditionary Force, which consisted of two Corps, the 1st under Sir Douglas Haig, and the 2nd under Sir Horace

Smith-Dorrien. The whole combatant strength was about 60,000 men, who left England almost as quietly as a shadow; and, except at Southampton, it was not publicly known that Britain had taken her place on the front in Belgium.

The speedy movement of such a large force to the port of departure was a record in railway history. The trains arrived from all parts of the country at intervals of twelve minutes. From the trains the troops embarked on the ships that came alongside the wharves, one after the other, like a line of vessels manœuvring. They had to be loaded with men, guns, ammunition, horses, fodder, and other equipment. The vessels, each under a naval officer, were of varying tonnage. One great Atlantic liner carried 3,000 men across at once. There was equal expedition in landing on the other side, and it was effected without interference or mishap, as if the German Navy was not in existence. The British Fleet was in possession of the North Sea and the Kaiser's vaunted navy was skulking in its own ports.

The concentration area of the British Expeditionary Force was at Mons, and owing to the fall of Namur, the enemy were able to attack the Allies with unexpected suddenness. The enemy's heavier guns forced the French to fall back on Saturday afternoon, August 22, but owing to some misunderstanding, or the breakdown of the Intelligence Service, Sir John French was not apprised of the French withdrawal, and he held his ground until Sunday afternoon. The British were outnumbered by four to one, out-classed in guns, but the infantry fired with the coolest precision; and the manner in which the cavalry, with tunics open and sometimes without tunics, charged the much-vaunted Uhlans in Berserk style, surprised even their own officers.

By the time Sir John French was aware of the French withdrawal, the British Army was in the jaws of a trap that might at any moment close upon it, and 70,000 men perforce

would have to lay down their arms against the 200,000 Germans who were opposed to them. On Sunday afternoon the British force defeated the enemy, and that same night began the historic and terrific "Retreat from Mons," that was to last thirteen days. Fights by day were followed by retirements by night for a hundred miles. The men did not understand that it was not from anything lacking on their part, but because General Joffre, the French Commander-in-Chief, could not get reinforcements brought up in time to beat off the enemy and therefore must fall back to the reinforcements. Nevertheless the British kept up their courage and discipline, and never had troops needed those qualities more than in those terribly trying circumstances.

When the retreat began, the Forest of Mormal made it difficult to withdraw the whole force by one flank, and so while Haig retired with the 1st Corps by the east side of the forest, Smith-Dorrien retired by the west. It turned out to be almost a fatal divergence, for on August 26 the Germans made a desperate attempt to envelop Smith-Dorrien's force at Le Cateau. Although isolated and fatigued, the 2nd Corps fought a fine defensive battle, beat off the enemy, and joined up with Haig on September 1.

Three days later Joffre halted the retreat—he was reinforced, and was ready to turn and strike back. The enemy forces were in the form of a huge arc 200 miles wide and 30 miles deep, and Paris, only twenty miles away, appeared to be in their grasp. Von Kluck was on the German right, and towards the east were four armies, two of them led by Bülow and the Imperial Crown Prince. The detached German left wing under the Crown Prince of Bavaria threatened Nancy. The Germans proposed for Kluck to turn the left of the French line, the Bavarians to turn the right, while the French centre was broken in Champagne.

From the south of the Marne the Allies' line extended to

were the men weary, but their ranks had been terribly thinned. The 7th Division, fighting for days on an eight-mile front against an enemy four times its strength, had only about 40 officers left out of 400, and out of 12,000 men only 2,340 remained. The 1st Brigade of the 1st Division could only muster 8 officers out of 150, and only 500 men out of 5,000. Some battalions were but fragments of their original strength; for example, the Royal Scots Fusiliers now consisted of only 70 men under the command of a junior subaltern.

So on Saturday morning, October 31, the position was extremely grave, when the enemy began what promised to be an overwhelming onslaught. It was not surprising that the 1st and 3rd Brigades of the 1st Division could not hold Gheluvelt and fell back among the woods towards Veldhoek; and this uncovered the left of the 7th Division that was forced back towards the Klein Zillebeke ridge. The Germans were pouring into the Gheluvelt gap, and were pressing on the whole arc of the salient, and to assist in stemming the onrush Sir John French had no reserves except a few oddments of infantry and cavalry that had suffered badly during the last few days. In his extremity he appealed to Foch for reinforcements, but Foch's own losses had been terrible and he was unable to comply.

The case of the British Army appeared to be without the least hope of redemption, when shortly after 2 p.m. Sir Douglas Haig watched the scene from the Menin Road. Nothing could save the day but stopping that disastrous gap, although at the moment it was cheering to observe that a handful of South Wales Borderers, ensconced in a sunken road, was harassing the flank of the German advance. Haig gave orders to withdraw a little west of Hooge, but no matter what heroic stand might be made there, he well knew the town could not be saved. He concluded that it would be necessary to retire west of Ypres, and Sir John French agreed with his decision.

The news that came in grew from very bad to infinitely worse. At Hooze Châteaux, the headquarters of the 1st and 2nd Divisions, the two commanders and several of their staff were killed during a heavy shelling. Everywhere there was confusion : officers commanded any troops that happened to be at hand. Everything appeared to be at an end—everything that mattered.

Suddenly the pall of gloom was at least temporarily lifted. Somewhere north of the Menin Road the enemy advance had come to a standstill, and the 1st Division was re-forming. It seemed as if the very gods of war had intervened on our behalf in the shape of a military miracle. It was an epic story that was revealed a little later. It was no miracle—it was no more than the silent heroism of a few men, whose incomparable spirit refused to recognise when they were beaten.

Brigadier-General FitzClarence, V.C., who commanded the 1st (Guards) Brigade in the 1st Division, seeing that his last reserves failed to fill the gap, rode off to the 1st Division headquarters to make known the hopelessness of the position. At the south-west corner of Polygon Wood he found a battalion of the 2nd Worcesters, part of the 2nd Division, waiting in support. In that desperate moment FitzClarence could give no thought to the men belonging to another Division. He wanted them, and Major Hankey, in command of them, put them at the Brigadier's orders without any hesitation.

Straightway the Worcesters made for a position between the South Wales Borderers and Gheluvelt, advancing in a series of short rushes under a heavy artillery fire. They then dug themselves in, and with a heavy flank fire brought the German advance to a decided halt. Thanks to that utterly unexpected relief, the 7th Division got back to its former line, and the 6th Cavalry Brigade filled the gap between the 1st and 7th Divisions. By the time darkness descended, the German advance west of Gheluvelt was held up, and the

British front, no matter how woefully thin, was again unbroken.

Notwithstanding the fact that every man in the British Army was a hero who pulled his full weight in the desperate struggle, in which the French gallantly supported them, one has to stress the brilliant performance of an English county regiment, the 2nd Worcesters, because it was one of the few examples where the instant decision of a subordinate commander and the bravery and tenacity of only one battalion of men, saved the day when apparently all was lost.

The fight persisted until November 11, when the Prussian Guard, the very flower of the Kaiser's army, came into action at the behest of their imperial master to prove their superiority over the Guards of Britain. They came along the Menin Road goose-stepping in conscious pride of their great reputation. In some places they forced themselves through the British lines, but the guns pounded them, bullets mowed them down in swathes, and bayonets drank of their blood. The pride of the German hosts withered, and the remnant that remained was metaphorically flung at the feet of the Kaiser, whose command they had faithfully, but unsuccessfully, endeavoured to carry out.

Brigadier-General FitzClarence was killed in this last engagement. He had done his work and was now gone, but his achievement will be treasured for ever in the annals of his country. It was true that we had lost Gheluvelt and Ypres was soon a heap of ruins, but they were comparatively small items that could not mar what was a brilliant record in British arms. During the whole period of the war the salient would never cease to be one of the cockpits of the campaign, but no German ever entered Ypres except as a prisoner. Over and above all was the fact that the Germans had been thwarted in their dash on Paris, and now they had failed to gain possession of the Channel ports. It proved to the Hun that he was not



the sole arbiter of the fate of other nations, who insisted on taking a hand in the shaping of their own destinies.

The Battle of Waterloo, although the issue concerned the fate of nations, was begun and ended in a single day, but in this war of wars, a battle ran into days, weeks—even months. This mighty struggle at Ypres was battle piled on battle lasting from October 18 to November 11, and even then it was broken off only to begin again a few months later.

In these weeks of violent conflict, in which the outcome was of the most tremendous consequence, Sir Douglas Haig gave evidence of masterly leadership, to which Sir John French bore grateful testimony in his despatches. He paid a special tribute to "the manner in which Sir Douglas Haig extricated his corps from an exceptionally difficult position in the darkness of the night," at Landrecies just before the battle of Le Cateau. The direction and command of the 1st Corps, said Sir John, had been "so skilful, bold, and decisive in character, that he gained positions which alone have enabled me to maintain my position for more than three weeks of very severe fighting. I cannot speak too highly of the valuable services rendered by him."

Sir Douglas Haig held the line in the new position in Flanders with marvellous skill and undaunted courage. He was at Hooge with Sir John French, who afterwards penned some high compliments to Haig and his divisional and brigade commanders. He said: "Words fail me to express the admiration I feel for their conduct or my sense of the incalculable services they rendered. I venture to predict that their deeds during these days of stress and trial will furnish some of the most brilliant chapters which will be found in the military history of our time."

It was a critical and dangerous task to attempt to stop the first rush of the Germans, superior in numbers and the supply of munitions, but the Commander of the 1st Army Corps

was the ideal man for the post of danger. His grim determination, skilful forethought, and characteristic stubbornness were just the qualities required in such an hour of need. He was promoted to full General at the end of October for distinguished service in the face of the enemy, and never was an honour more thoroughly deserved.

On October 31 it was betokened that "Lucky Haig's" good fortune had not deserted him. Just at the climax of the peril of the Germans breaking through, a shell burst inside his headquarters and every member of the staff was either killed or wounded. When General French came up to make a thrust at Gheluvelt, he found the leader of the 1st Army Corps just recovering consciousness. It was a most miraculous escape; he was no more than badly shaken; he refused to go to hospital, and at once proceeded to rally his men and make new dispositions against the enemy.

It was at Ypres that Sir Douglas Haig's brilliancy as a defensive strategist and tactician and his personal courage were first revealed to the rank and file. When the struggle had reached its most acute point, when the thin British line had bent almost to cracking, when the gloating Germans were battering their way to Gheluvelt, our troops, sullenly retiring before the deadly pressure, almost at the end of their endurance, saw Sir Douglas Haig riding slowly up the Menin Road, as unperturbed as if at an inspection at Army manœuvres on Salisbury Plain. To Tommy Atkins the sight of him was as refreshing as a crystal drink to a parched man stumbling out of a fiery desert. On that day Haig won the confidence of his men, and nothing afterwards was able to shake it. No matter what disaster struck them, or what crisis sprang up, they knew him for a leader of men; they felt his calm confidence in his cause; they knew he had confidence in them; and with Haig to lead them, they would see the accursed business through to the end.

In this First Battle of Ypres Haig was always close up among the troops, putting to the test that stern, almost merciless, discipline that he enjoined on the parade ground. It was largely due to him that the line held, and but for him, Ypres would never have become one of the world's most famous battle-fields.

The British troops were gradually reinforced by fresh divisions ; at the end of the year they were divided into two armies, and the First Army was placed under the command of Sir Douglas Haig. It consisted of the three corps on the British right, the Second Army being further north about Ypres.

No matter how long the war continued, the fighting of the first twelve weeks would of necessity prove of far-reaching effect. Germany was armed to the teeth in readiness for the conflict ; she had a larger army than France and Britain combined ; and she had a wealth of artillery, machine-guns, and excellent transport. Her object was to beat Britain and France before the slowly-moving Russia could bring her vast numbers into the fray. If Germany failed to win the verdict in her rapid onslaught on France, then she would have to fight on two fronts, the East and the West ; and meanwhile Britain and France would be afforded time in which to raise more armies and train them for the field.

The Emperor of Germany with his braggart heroics had disdainfully referred to Sir John French's "contemptible little army." Well, the "Old Contemptibles" had made a hash of the Kaiser's programme in no uncertain fashion, and he must have been aware that Nemesis was already casting a shadow on Prussian pomp and glory.

This first stage of the war saw the Germans and the Allies each with a wall of flesh extending from the North Sea to the Alps. The end no man could foretell—but the Allies were confident of the justice of their cause, backed up by the unconquerable spirit which commands success.

## CHAPTER V

### HAIG—COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

THE beginning of the new year saw the British forces in Flanders increased to 300,000, but the supply of munitions was quite inadequate to make much impression on the German front that had been strongly fortified. Fighting everywhere was incessant, but reference can be made only to important battles, and particularly to incidents that illustrate the new methods of warfare employed by the enemy, which presented the British leaders with problems for which their military training had not prepared them.

By this time the front in France had become more stabilised, and Sir Douglas Haig, now an Army Commander, was enabled to prove his ability to adapt himself to the changed conditions of trench warfare, which was so vastly different from the dashing cavalry attacks with which his experience in the Sudan and South Africa had familiarised him. He undertook the planning of the operations at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle on March 10, and so thoroughly had he grasped the new conditions, that his dispositions and orders for the battle became in their essential details the model of all future British attacks during the war, except in regard to the length of the preliminary bombardment.

Neuve Chapelle proved to be no more than a minor success that could not be driven home against the enemy's machine-guns and barbed wire without a larger supply of high-explosive shells. In this battle airmen played a prominent part, especially

by dropping bombs on railways that were of service in the enemy's rear. Just more than a month later, the British captured Hill 60 at Ypres, which was the prelude to another sanguinary struggle in that blood-soaked salient.

The German successes had been won not so much by weight of numbers as their prodigal use of ammunition. They began the war with 50,000 machine-guns and by the middle of 1915 were believed to have 97,000 such weapons on the Western Front of 600 miles, so that there was a machine-gun to nearly every ten yards. In the British Army at the beginning of the war there were only two machine-guns to each battalion or cavalry regiment. Now Great Britain was waking up to the needs of the Army, and engineering and motor works were being commandeered wholesale in order to turn them into munition factories. The Ministry of Munitions, that was formed in June, 1915, was soon employing 2,500,000 men, and 1,000,000 women, and in addition 10,000 firms were at work for it. The war was going to resolve itself into a race for munitions, and the British Army was assured of abundant supplies when the factories got into full swing.

In April the Salient of Ypres was the scene of a conflict marked by more horrors than had been witnessed five months earlier. The French held the left of the front of the salient, the Canadian Division and the British 28th Division were in the centre, and the 27th Division held the right.

The Germans began to bombard the town on Thursday, April 20, which was accepted as the herald of a special attack. Two days later, when the weather was calm and pleasant, with a gentle north-east breeze, the British artillery observers noticed that the French trenches, which were largely manned by coloured troops, were being enveloped with a strange green vapour.

The evening drew on—an exquisite evening, but never had a particularly beautiful sky looked down upon anything

more devilish than was in progress. For the first time in warfare the Germans were making use of gas, that heaped terror on terror in a struggle that one had imagined could not possibly be rendered more hideous.

Blinded and coughing, terrified by something that was something more than human fear, the French troops left the trenches, and surged over the canal in a headlong rout. As they fell back, the Canadians saw the dusky soldiers with terror-stricken eyes, their chests heaving, and their lips speechless with agony—and behind them they had left hundreds of their comrades, that the chemical horror had left dead on the ground, with their blue faces horribly contorted and froth on their lips. The following is the account of a young Canadian, little more than a boy, who came through the inferno :

“We didn’t know even yet what had happened, because we were not near enough to the end of the line to see the retirement of the French Colonials and the reason of their flight. . . . And then all of a sudden the ground in front of us seemed to open, and up sprang the enemy, running straight at us with fixed bayonets. . . . Then we settled down to give them a real Canadian welcome. We shot and shot till our barrels were almost red-hot—but the more we killed the more there seemed to be. And meanwhile, of course, shells were bursting all about us.

“I don’t remember much more. I know there was an awful gassy smell that seemed to draw all his breath out of a man’s body. Some of the gas got to us, and some of our men went down with it. Our eyes were red and inflamed and our brains were on fire. We were covered with mud from head to foot and our faces were flaming red with hate and rage, and the awful fumes made us double up with coughing. But we fought on. We fought and fought as we went back, so that our rifles jammed and were useless, and we threw them away and took others from the bodies of the dead.”

The foregoing is pungent with horror, and yet the narrator had experienced no more than a whiff of the poison cloud of deadly chlorine gas that the enemy had prepared in time of peace, and had now let loose with deliberate calculation against a foe that was too honourable ever to have conceived such a villainous aid to success.

As the victims lay in the trenches, tearing at their throats for breath, their faces drawn with torment, blood foam on their lips, the Germans, when the cloud had passed, bayoneted the poor wretches as yet they writhed in agony, and were powerless to raise a hand in their own defence.

The German manoeuvre, bred in cunning and nurtured in hate, created a huge rent in the Allied line, and as the left was entirely unsupported, the Canadians were forced to retreat along the St. Julien Road, stubbornly fighting every yard of it. At one point they took a bitter revenge. The Germans, advancing impetuously in mass, came almost to the muzzles of the guns of a detachment of artillery, and into the dense horde of humanity the Canadian gunners at point-blank range poured a murderous fire, that laid the enemy down like corn before a machine-reaper.

West of St. Julien, more Canadians set themselves to the task of recovering four guns that were lost earlier in the evening. Under the light of the moon they formed into four lines, which one at a time rushed forward in face of a bitter fire. At the sound of a bugle all four lines dashed forward—the Germans faded away and the guns were back in the fold.

In the village of St. Julien there was a gallant band that would not yield until gas attacks on Friday and Saturday made evacuation imperative. Even then a devoted vanguard remained with no shadow of hope of salvation, in order that the withdrawal could be effected without the entire force being annihilated. Horatius at the Bridge was a tyro in courage compared to each of these devoted souls, who were

left to fight not flesh and bone and muscle, but the vile and torturing concoction of the German military chemist. They fought until they were smitten with agonising death throes, but they had paid their dues to civilisation and freedom, and where they had sowed in distorting pain, their comrades would reap a glorious success, for the gas attack had failed, and once more the Germans were thrust outside that blood-drenched salient.

In this same month, April, the Allies had landed at Gallipoli after fierce fighting. This distant campaign had the effect of robbing Sir John French of a considerable portion of the reinforcements he had been anxiously awaiting.

From the very beginning of hostilities, there was one novel feature in warfare in the shape of aircraft that was common to both the Allies and the Germans, although the latter were better supplied than their opponents. The airmen rendered excellent service in reconnaissance work, in gun control, and in bomb-dropping. In the past generals had always found it difficult to learn what was afoot on the other side of a hill, but their airmen now kept them well informed. Consequently command of the air became of vital importance, and aircraft would be multiplied to an almost undreamt-of extent.

In the use of asphyxiating gases the Germans sprang a particularly disconcerting surprise upon their opponents. It was in direct opposition to every recognised convenience of civilised warfare. It was done by means of detonating bombs, or by squirting the gas from special apparatus when a favourable wind was blowing. Being heavier than air, the vapour travelled like a ground mist, and did not dissipate before its fell work was accomplished.

Another new device was a kind of large blow-pipe for spraying burning petrol, or oil mixed with phosphorus, on the Allied trenches and troops. Particularly severe burns were inflicted by means of this barbarous contrivance, whose use



was in contravention of The Hague Conventions, making it clear that the Germans were prepared to sacrifice their last shred of honour in pursuit of their purpose. Thus the British generals were faced by a vile situation that their military training had not taken into account. In self-defence they would either have to copy the infamous devices of the enemy or evolve some means of counteracting them. In order to fight, a gas mask became part of every soldier's equipment and the chemical onslaught was robbed of its worst terrors.

The dart, or arrow, which disappeared from warfare four centuries ago, was now being used by airmen. Small steel darts, about the size of a short lead pencil, dropped a hundred at a time from a height of a thousand feet or more over hostile troops, proved to be very deadly in effect. The French were the first to use them, but the Germans followed suit on a large scale.

Trench howitzers were largely employed by the Germans. They are short light guns with a range of only from 50 to 400 yards, that eject the projectile into the air to fall at a steep angle upon the enemy's trenches. The weight of the shell is about 220 lb. Its explosion leaves a deep hole, destroys earth-works, and carries death or maiming to any persons in the vicinity. The Allies quickly adopted the trench mortar.

Early in May the Battle of Festubert was fought, that again fell short of decisive victory for lack of shells. It was said that Germany and Austria were turning out 250,000 shells a day, whereas our output was no more than 10,000 a day.

The month of September saw Sir Percy Scott appointed to command the gunnery defences of London against aircraft, in token that our island security had been pierced by the new arm, and England had the war brought home to her closer than ever had been imagined was possible.

On September 25, at the Battle of Loos, the Scottish 15th Division particularly distinguished itself. Piper Laidlaw of the King's Own Scottish Borderers piped his men over the top at 6.30 to the tune of "Blue Bonnets over the Border." The 44th Brigade, consisting of the 9th Black Watch, the 8th Seaforths, 7th Camerons, and Gordons, went at the enemy's barbed wire with a wild rush that carried them through it at the price of bleeding limbs and faces and betattered kilts and tunics.

In just an hour they were masters of the enemy's second line of defences, and Loos was theirs. Next they swarmed up Hill 70 in resistless style. All regimental formation was gone, but the red tartans of the Camerons and the green of the Gordons was none the less an overwhelming wave that the enemy could not turn back, and the hill was taken by 9 o'clock.

Although now only a few hundreds strong, the Highlanders dashed down the eastern side of the hill. In three hours they had advanced almost four miles, and north and south of them they were without supports; so far were they in advance of the British line—and consequently few of those who had engaged in the almost superhuman adventure returned. But they had shaken the German line in a style that made even the enemy stare in open admiration, for the men were not old Regulars, but were of the new army, men who but a few months earlier had been following their peaceful vocations at home, and they had been in France only a few weeks.

The Highlanders' exploit, even if it had been devoid of tangible result, was one to fill one with pride. Their élan, the very madness of it, was proof that Britain was not prepared to write "Ichabod" over her doors as long as she could breed such gallant sons.

Sir Douglas Haig's plans in this battle were full of promise that was borne out when the enemy's front was virtually pierced; but largely owing to reinforcements not being sent to him with

sufficient promptitude, the ground that had been captured could not be retained, and the victory was not as complete as had appeared likely during the first few hours of the attack.

In December, 1915, a change was made in the supreme command of the British Expeditionary Force ; Sir John French returned to England, and the leadership inevitably fell upon Sir Douglas Haig.

It is easy to point out faults in the conduct of affairs that were always of vital import, but there was no doubt that the temperament of Sir John French was not always conducive to that close liaison that was urgently necessary between the British and their Allies. One example must suffice : Sir John considered that Lanrezac left him in the lurch at Mons, although in all probability local circumstances left the French general no option but to pursue the course he followed. A few days later, when Lanrezac appealed to Haig for assistance, the latter readily consented, only to find that Sir John French vetoed it, in what looked like a spirit of retaliation.

Haig's influence upon not a few occasions made a great impression on the French leaders, because of his better understanding of the French mind, more balanced view, and spirit of helpfulness, inspired by a genuine desire for a real co-operation with the Allies. It did not mean that Haig was willing to abandon his own opinion, when once formed on what he considered to be sound conclusions. Often, for example, he and Joffre failed to have the same views, but it was rarely that they were unable to come to a complete understanding, and if they agreed to differ, they recognised each other's common honesty of purpose, and the argument left no soreness.

Sir Douglas Haig could not very well have taken over the command of the British Armies in France at a worse juncture. The Battle of Loos had increased the number of problems that had to be faced. One lesson of the battle was that the Army

was now decidedly short of Staff officers, and many of the subordinate officers, leading the troops, were not as proficient in the every-day military work as was desirable, and in action their weakness was still more evident. It was obvious that his first task was to make the new armies more effective machines of war by means of trench experience and intensive training behind the line, and to that end the new Commander-in-Chief set himself with that inflexibility of purpose that was one of his hall-marks.

It was well known by his friends that his promotion to Commander-in-Chief afforded Haig no great pleasure, if only because he was taking the place of one to whom he had given loyal service during some very dark days, as he had done fifteen years earlier in South Africa. In his first despatches he paid a generous and large-hearted tribute to the work of his predecessor.

But having accepted the onerous duties that now devolved upon him, Haig would permit nothing to divert him from the prosecution of the war with every scrap of ability with which he was endowed. He never had any doubt that we should win the war, but would not venture to suggest when it would end. Somehow the troops knew of his belief and they had not lacked examples of his bulldog tenacity, than which nothing more appeals to Tommy Atkins, who had no complaints to make about the new Commander-in-Chief. In the darkest hour he was never flurried, never unbalanced, and those qualities counted heavily with the men, who had only to do as they were ordered without knowing upon what the decisions rested. With the troops under him he had only one failing, he did not understand that a word from him would give the men intense pleasure and bind them even more closely to him. More than one really great man has been similarly inarticulate and has not realised the magic in a friendly word or gesture. Lord Roberts instinctively touched the personal note, as did Sir John French

to a less extent. But silence was one of Haig's characteristics, and yet, with what was a disadvantage in that one respect, he won the trust and admiration of those who served under him.

If anyone hesitated to approve of Sir Douglas Haig's appointment to his high and onerous post, the testimony of Colonel Repington would remove the last lingering doubt, especially as the colonel was the comrade and personal friend of French from their Sudan days, and did not consider there was any necessity for a change in leadership.

Colonel Repington wrote of Haig as possessing "all the best qualities of a Chief of the Staff." He was methodical, sure, accomplished in all staff work, far-seeing, cautious, very determined—"A rather slow-thinking, prudent Scot, admirably equipped with all the technical knowledge of the science of war, and backed by the most implacable determination"; he had "a relentless Scottish tenacity, and where he fixed his teeth he never let go."

There was the considered opinion of a great military expert and critic, and if words have meaning, they were solid testimony to the wisdom of the decision that put Sir Douglas Haig in supreme command of Britain's greatest armies in the greatest of all wars.

## CHAPTER VI

### TWO YEARS OF BLOOD AND IRON

THE men who had borne the brunt of the fighting, especially during the first few months, were mostly dead or disabled ; the comparatively few survivors were now scattered throughout the Army. The new armies, that had undergone what doubtless they considered very severe training in England, speedily learnt that their apprenticeship to the god of war was not nearly completed ; they were no more than ready for the strenuous courses laid down by the Commander-in-Chief to initiate them into trench warfare, familiarise them with mazes of barbed wire, hidden machine-guns, heavy artillery, and other features of up-to-date fighting.

The withdrawal from Gallipoli relieved British man power of a severe drain, which was all to the advantage of the Western Front, where every available man and every possible gun were wanted for the gigantic Anglo-French operation that was impending on the Somme, which was undertaken in order to relieve the French of the fierce German pressure on Verdun.

On March 15, the British cause suffered an immense bereavement in the death of Lord Kitchener, who was aboard H.M.S. *Hampshire*, on his way to Petrograd, when the vessel struck a mine, and the great Field-Marshal, with his staff, was drowned off the west coast of the Orkneys. No one in the whole Empire had occasion to mourn his death more than Sir Douglas Haig, who had lost a personal friend and a professional colleague of

the highest standing, and the Army was bereft of his immense driving force at a period when it was about to be most needed.

The Battle of the Somme was preceded by several days' violent bombarding of the whole German line; there were numerous trench raids; on June 28, 1916, a score of German observation balloons were destroyed by incendiary projectiles; and the enemy was treated to his own physic in the shape of gas, which the Allies had begun to use in the previous year.

The attack was launched from Gommecourt, south of Peronne, on July 1, the British front extending about 13 miles and the French a little more than half that distance. The British were checked at Gommecourt, but on the right and in the centre they were more successful, although they made less progress than the French, whom the Germans had believed to be exhausted, and therefore opposed their greater strength to the British. We were, too, under the additional disadvantage of having to attack uphill, against entrenchments that had been converted into almost impregnable fortresses, instead of the weaker defences with which the French had been faced when they held this part of the front.

July 1 was the bloodiest day in the history of the British Army, our losses numbering 60,000 although only fourteen divisions were engaged. Nevertheless, there was hope in the unconquerable spirit displayed by the new armies of Britain, who carried on the bitter struggle in pursuance of Haig's decision to continue the attack; and at the price of heavy losses ground was gained and a deep salient was driven into the German front.

Delville Wood was the scene of a great exploit that began on July 14, and lasted for nearly a week. The position formed an awkward salient open to fire by the enemy from three sides, and the South African Brigade was given the difficult task of effecting its capture. The wood was a maze of shattered tree trunks, roots, much matted undergrowth, and innumerable

shell-holes—and only 200 yards away, and in places a much less distance, lay the Germans, protected by an immense number of machine-guns. Yet the wood must be taken, if we desired to complete our hold of the village of Longueval, most of which two Scottish brigades had captured.

The South Africans, commanded by General Lukin, were mostly of British extraction, but there were men among them who had opposed Britain in the Boer War. Under Lieutenant-Colonel Tanner of the 2nd South African Regiment, the Colonials moved to the attack a little before dawn, and early in the afternoon Tanner was in possession of the whole wood, except for a portion in the north-west.

It had been difficult to carry the wood, but it was infinitely harder for the twelve South African companies to hold the less than a square mile, faced by a semicircle of German trenches, and the easiest of targets for the guns of the German batteries that often fired 400 shells a minute.

During the night of the 15th the South Africans dug for their lives amid twisted tree trunks, roots, and wire, and by the time daylight arrived they had provided themselves with some useful cover, where for the rest of the day they had to suffer an unceasing concentrated fire that made it extremely hazardous to remove the wounded or bring up food and water.

Although the area contended for was so small, it was the key on which a great deal depended. Longueval and Delville stood together, one was useless to the British without the other, and failing to obtain them meant sacrificing the object of the battle of the 14th, and at the same time the right wing of the whole new front would be imperilled. French troops could not be spared to go to the relief of the Colonials, who must hold on if flesh and blood could endure it.

On the 17th the South Africans made an attack on the north-west corner, but failed; and on the next morning, when they made an attempt eastward, the Germans counter-attacked and



got into the southern portion of the wood. The 3rd South African Regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Thackeray, retained no more than the south-west corner of the wood. The other garrisons had been wiped out; the trenches were filled with wounded, who had to remain there because the stretcher-bearers were either dead or disabled.

At midnight another brigade brought partial relief, but it was not until the evening of the 20th that fresh troops were able to install themselves in what was left to us of Longueval and a small portion of the wood.

For six days and five nights the South Africans had faced the odds with death staring them in the face, constantly driving back the Germans in their frequent incursions in vastly superior numbers. The glory of their feat lay not in holding the position so long, but under such violent and continuous assaults.

Lukin's Brigade originally consisted of 120 officers and 3,030 men. When Thackeray marched out, he could muster no more than 143, the ultimate assembly totalling only 750. In all the long and vast campaign, no handful of men endured a week of more terror or won more glory.

What a subject for contemplation by the Kaiser! What a blistering commentary on his imperial and sanctified judgment! These heroes, a hundredfold, were the men whom he had expected to raise the flag of rebellion in South Africa—and they had elected instead to oppose his horde and fight and suffer for the Empire's cause.

Sir Douglas Haig sent the heroes his congratulations. Sir Henry Rawlinson recorded that, "In the capture of Delville Wood, the gallantry, perseverance, and determination of the South African Brigade deserve the highest commendation." Lieutenant-Colonel Tanner's report said: "Each individual was firm in the knowledge of his confidence in his comrades, and was, therefore, able to fight with that power which good discipline alone can produce. A finer record of this spirit could not

be found than the line of silent bodies along the 'Strand' ride of the wood, over which the enemy had not dared to tread."

Brigadier Lukin's tribute to the few haggard and shaken survivors was as touching as it was sincere. When the heroic remnant paraded before him, he uncovered his head to take the salute, and the tears in his eyes were a credit to his manhood.

Delville Wood, that now contains the graves of the South African troops who fell there and in numerous later battles, is now a part of South Africa, for the French Government handed to the Government of the Union of South Africa the title-deeds of that hallowed and historic spot.

On September 15, after more than two months of continuous fighting, the British disclosed a long jealously guarded secret by launching an attack by "tanks," which it was hoped would prove to be the key to open the trench deadlock. Although the appearance of these crawling fortresses at first caused indescribable confusion and demoralisation among the enemy, their use was premature; only fifty-nine of them were employed in detachments of twos and threes; the drivers were yet ill-trained; and the infantry failed to co-operate with them. Finally, the tanks had been designed to attack trenches of the pattern of 1915, since when trenches had been converted into veritable fortifications.

A tank is a form of ironclad that by means of its caterpillar wheels can not only crawl over the land, but is capable of surmounting obstacles in rather an extraordinary manner. The following is Mr. Philip Gibbs' account of the exploits of a tank:

"It leant against a battered wall until it fell and then crawled over the debris. It went through High Wood, smashing the trees like sticks before it. It went up to machine-gun emplacements, crushed the gun under its ribs, and passed on, spitting death at the demoralised Germans. It stamped down a dug-

out as though it were a wasps' nest. It sat on heaps of ruins and fired down a village street. It went right through the old German trenches; it crashed through broken barns and houses, 'straddled' a dug-out, and fired enfilading shots down the German trenches."

*The Times* correspondent expressed his opinion without any imaginative touches. He said that, "in one short hour the tanks did more military service, killed more enemy in uniform, and had a greater influence on the war than all the Zeppelins had ever done."

Although most of the tanks broke down or were "ditched," their use on that day was at least a promise of something more effective when the time was ripe.

The Allied Armies had regained some very important ground and were nearing Bapaume and Peronne. Some British Ministers were criticising the conduct of the campaign, especially at the manner in which the Commander-in-Chief kept hurling his divisions at the enemy's wire and machine-guns at such a terrible cost. But General Ludendorff did not hesitate to admit that he had struck the Germans "a staggering blow" on the Somme; they "had been fought to a standstill and were utterly worn out." Such an admission by a great enemy general counted for far more than the opinions of arm-chair critics in London. It was an amazing thing that fatuous politicians, with what of necessity must be very imperfect knowledge, should have the temerity to attempt to dictate to a great soldier who had devoted his life to the study of arms. They would be the first to protest if the soldier suggested how to run their own civilian departments, that deal with futile matters compared to the great issues of the life and death of the troops and the aftermath of consequences.

It was true that on the Somme our casualties were 412,000, but the German losses were equally heavy, and we had taken 100,000 prisoners. And when in November we attacked on the

Ancre and captured Beaumont Hamel, the enemy had no alternative but to fall back.

In December, 1916, the command of the French armies was relinquished by Joffre. Field-Marshal Haig and the great French general had worked together most amicably, sometimes in circumstances when friction might easily have arisen—and presently Haig would find himself in a less sympathetic atmosphere in French high quarters, that would endanger that close liaison that was increasingly necessary.

Sir Douglas Haig started the year 1917 by being promoted to the rank of Field-Marshal, an honour that those who served under him knew "Lucky Haig" had most thoroughly deserved. No matter how gruelling had been those months on the Somme, their leader still retained their confidence, just as he trusted in them; and whenever a success was achieved, he always attributed it to "all ranks." It was a favourite expression of Haig's, and "all ranks" responded by rendering "Duggie," as they called him, unfailing trust and devotion.

In the spring America declared war against Germany, which in due course would mean more man-power for the Allies who, in the middle of March, had been struck a disastrous blow by the abdication of the Tsar of Russia, whose empire was crumbling in revolution and was reduced to impotence in the struggle. It would enable Germany to transfer large bodies of troops from the Eastern Front to France—with what result none could foresee.

However, hostilities were not being relaxed, and there was no cessation in the harrying of the Germans. In March we captured Bapaume, and in April scored victories at Vimy Ridge and Bullecourt; the last-named success cost us 146,000 casualties, our only consolation being that the enemy losses were still more severe.

In June Messines Ridge was taken, being suddenly stormed in a fashion that marked it as one of the most brilliant victories that

had yet fallen to our arms ; and notwithstanding the dash and courage of the troops the casualty list was comparatively light. For the first time since the war began, Sir Douglas Haig was able to report that the British airmen had driven the Germans from the air. This victory was one of the most solid successes of the war, which created a revival of spirit throughout the armies in France at a time when encouragement was badly needed.

The New Zealand Expeditionary Force won laurels at Gallipoli and in Egypt before going to France, where they vied with their Australian friends in exhibiting the coolest valour in face of the enemy. The New Zealanders took part in a number of battles and in each one gave a spirited account of themselves.

In the attack on Messines the New Zealand Division fought on a frontage of nearly a mile. At one point the forward movement was checked by German machine-guns firing from positions among the ruins of the village. The awkward situation was relieved by the daring action of Lance-Corporal Samuel Frickleton, New Zealand Infantry. Although slightly wounded, he dashed forward at the head of his section, pushed into our barrage and, single-handed, destroyed with bombs an enemy machine-gun and its crew. He then attacked a second gun and killed the whole of the crew of twelve. He finished his work by bombing the dug-out below, killing the nine men within who refused to come out. This succession of courageous deeds undoubtedly prevented further casualties, both to the New Zealanders and other units coming forward, and led to the final capture of the objective. For his magnificent courage and gallantry Lance-Corporal Frickleton was awarded the V.C.

There was a different story to tell of the Third Battle of Ypres that began on July 31. It was doomed to failure before it began, largely because of the impassable state of the ground,

and finally the offensive was submerged in the swamps of Passchendaele at the end of October.

One, who saw Sir Douglas Haig surveying the pock-marked region the day before the Passchendaele fight, was struck by the calmness of his face when he could not possibly be feeling more harassed. "He was as inscrutable as one imagines Napoleon or Wellington were when they rode round their puny battle-fields. Yet, at that moment and for long before, divisions had been flinging themselves with desperate courage at the terribly powerful enemy, deeply entrenched behind their ridges, and had been gaining miserably small pieces of ground at infinite cost."

The Battle of Passchendaele was a ghastly affair in which many lives were sucked into its sickening swamps. Every man engaged was a hero, but it is not invidious to mention the Gordon Highlanders, waist deep in the liquid mud in the face of unending streams of shells and bullets. They pushed forward, with clogged rifles that would not fire, as they endeavoured to conquer by the bayonet in a frenzy of courage, but they were forced to retire with awful losses, beaten by the pitiless mud.

"Yet, with it all, Sir Douglas Haig was as immobile as a statue, inflexible, unbending, a man of Scotch granite, holding a world on his shoulders—but they were broad shoulders. And one felt the mighty power behind that quiet eye, marvelling at the calm serenity that must have cloaked a mind of anguish, but confident that this was the man who in the end would bring his armies to victory."

In October the British Army had to be denuded of 100,000 troops, sent to the assistance of Italy, who entered the war in 1915, and was now being pressed by the enemy to breaking point. The year had been sufficiently trying for Field-Marshal Haig without a set-back of that nature—having to lend men to another front when he needed every one of them himself.

For three months too in the earlier part of the year, he was placed by the Government practically under Nivelle, a junior French general, untried even in his own country's High Command ; but Haig bore the lack of confidence with admirable patience and dignity, until Nivelle's appointment was recognised as a mistake and he was superseded by General Pétain.

In this devastating war not a few generals holding the smaller commands had broken down hopelessly under the intolerable strain and had to be sent away from the front. But Haig stood four square to troubles both military and political, facing his difficulties with unbending doggedness, professional ardour, and always with the inextinguishable hope that all would yet be well.

In Haig's character too there was more than the stern stuff of the soldier. The knowledge that his decisions and orders might involve incalculable loss of life must have been a grievous burden to one who possessed much innate kindness of heart and was a gallant Christian gentleman.

He was solicitous for "all ranks" in small matters, let alone those that concerned the life-blood of those serving under him. A non-commissioned officer was stopped one day by the Commander-in-Chief, and asked how much home leave he had received since coming out to France. The scarcity of leave at that time was causing much dissatisfaction among the troops, and the knowledge of it had filtered to G.H.Q. The man interrogated had no personal grievance on that score, but he was able to tell of other men who had very substantial grounds for complaint. Sir Douglas Haig said that the scarcity of leave had been worrying him a great deal, but he had asked the Government to place more leave ships at his disposal. The non-com. was not slow to repeat the conversation to his comrades, and soon afterwards leave permits were far more abundant and Tommy Atkins was calling Haig's name blessed.

One day when the guns were booming in the Ypres salient, Haig was prowling round in a uniform that for him resembled

nothing like that of a "pukka" commander. He encountered an R.F.A. driver who had been delivering shells near Hell Fire Corner, and was nosing about in search of the safest way back to the lines with his team. Haig asked him what he was doing there. "Nothing much," was the off-handed reply. "I'm trying to get 'Old Haig's' munition cart home in safety." The Commander laughed and gave the man some useful tips about the geography of the locality—and it was not until later that the driver learnt the identity of the one who had addressed him.

The following is an example of that simple kindness to unimportant people that is the mark of the great gentleman. A little girl who worshipped him in secret, wrote him a letter. She addressed it to him in France, and told him how much she admired him, and spoke of a much-loved brother in the fighting line, and how anxiously she awaited news of him. She told no one of her letter, but waited, shyly hugging to her heart a tiny hope. And then one day the hope was justified. A reply came. To her delight and the astonishment of her elders, it contained a signed photograph of her hero, and what was more, a reassuring message about her brother under arms.

Although the Field-Marshal appeared to be remote from human emotion, and at no period in our history had so much responsibility rested on the shoulders of one man, he found time—and inclination—to gratify the wishes of a child. During the British offensive on the Somme, G.H.Q. was established in a château that was half a farmhouse. A single sentry stood at the gates. Visitors to G.H.Q. were always surprised to hear the laughter of children in that fateful spot. The Commander-in-Chief had refused to allow the occupants to be turned out. There was no pomp or circumstance about his headquarters. Simplicity was the key-note. He moved through the terrible anxiety of those crowded days, grey and calm and impassive, packing his weary generals off early to bed so that they would be



ready for the morrow, while often he himself would pore over his maps and plans until the small hours.

The Commander-in-Chief was rarely seen by the rank and file, but they knew that "Duggie" was there, and to them he symbolised the victory, that might yet be far off, but come it would in God's good time.

## CHAPTER VII

### BREAKING THE HINDENBURG LINE—AND GERMANY

THE British Army was weakened by the transference of troops to Italy at a time when the Germans had been relieved of the Russian menace to their western frontier and were now able to strengthen their forces in France.

Nevertheless, Sir Douglas Haig, on November 20, made a bold and skilful attack on the enemy at Cambrai, when without any artillery preparation, he let loose 400 tanks to advance against the German highly-fortified line. The machines were great improvements upon those used fourteen months earlier, and in particular some of them were of much lighter build—"whippets," easy to handle and quite speedy compared to the heavier crawling fortresses.

The British advance continued until the Germans were dealt another blow at Bournon Wood. Then the pendulum of battle swung against Sir Douglas Haig—the enemy counter-attacked on the last day of November and regained much of the ground they had lost. In this series of fight after fight, the British casualties were 45,000, apparently with little material gain, but the moral effect had been tremendous. But now winter had come to give the Germans a respite; it would enable them to bring up immense reinforcements that would inevitably have a marked effect on the situation.

By March, 1918, the Germans were ready to make a great onslaught on the British front, the point selected for attack being near St. Quentin, a section of the line recently taken over

from the French, and where the defences were decidedly defective. The enemy massed 600,000 men against the 190,000 in the 5th Army under General Gough. It was no fault of Sir Douglas Haig's that the front of the 5th and 3rd British Armies was spread out in a line far longer and thinner than they should ever have been asked to defend. He had foreseen the danger and the hour of its coming, and had appealed in vain for reinforcements.

In Chapter III. a sapper tells of an incident he witnessed in the South African War. He did not see his old Chief again until March, 1918, when the Field-Marshal noticed his South African ribbon, remembered him, and referred to that scene on the veldt seventeen years earlier. "I wonder," said Haig, "whether that little Boer girl is still alive." It was not until a few days later the sapper learnt that the Commander-in-Chief had just had a son and heir born to him.

The German attack opened on Friday, March 21, with a violent bombardment with a prodigal use of gas shells, and powerful guns searched the country for miles behind the Allied lines. The enemy advanced on a front of fifty miles from Croisilles to La Fere and, although their dense formation led to their suffering very severe losses, they penetrated the British front, which forced the 5th Army to beat a precipitate retreat.

Sir Douglas Haig's deeply religious character and his serenity in face of threatened danger were well illustrated by an incident that occurred in the midst of this frightful blow to the Allied hopes. Professor George S. Duncan, of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, who was Presbyterian Chaplain at the British General Headquarters in France from the beginning to the end of the war, held a service regularly at 9.30 a.m. at a little wooden hut in the neighbourhood. The Commander-in-Chief never failed to attend if he were in residence in the locality, but on that black Sunday following the outbreak of the German offensive, Professor Duncan was just telling a visiting

chaplain, who was to conduct the service, that there was no prospect of seeing Sir Douglas Haig that morning, who would be either tied to his desk or else had gone forward to direct operations. To Professor Duncan's immense surprise at that moment the familiar car drew up at the door of the hut on the ramparts of Montreuil, and the Field-Marshal stepped out. They shook hands in silence, and then, scarcely knowing what he said, the chaplain expressed the hope that things were not too bad.

"They will never be too bad," replied the Chief quietly, but reassuringly.

"No," answered the chaplain "you who were through Mons and Ypres in the first year will never think anything too bad after that."

Although Professor Duncan knew that the Chief lived his religion, he did not talk about it, but now he showed his innermost heart. With his eyes fixed and his jaw set, he said :

"This is what you read to us from Chronicles a few Sundays ago—'Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude ; for the battle is not yours but God's.' " (2 Chronicles xx. 15.)

With those words the Field-Marshal passed into the church. The chaplain remarks : "It showed an amazing power of detachment that on so critical a morning, he could think of motor-ing two miles, as he did, to attend a simple church service. Perhaps that Biblical quotation reveals something of his secret. The battle had passed out of human hands, but it was still in God's, and under God it depended on him more than any man if defeat was to be turned into victory. Little wonder that he came to pray, and as it happened on that Sunday evening, he did the biggest thing in his career, for, returning to Montreuil after midnight, after a fruitless consultation at Drury, near Amiens, with General Pétain, which revealed that our Allies were more concerned about defending Paris than about

keeping the line intact, he immediately wired to London, urging that steps be taken at once to secure a Generalissimo for the whole Allied front. By so doing, he made what for a Commander-in-Chief was the supreme sacrifice ; but the line was saved."

On March 26 the Germans reached Albert, and on that same day, by agreement among the Allies, Foch was appointed to the supreme command of the Allied Armies in the west.

In all his brilliant career Haig never did anything finer than in this self-abnegation in the hour of crisis. Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. Boraston, in minutely examining Haig's strategy in France and Flanders, says : " Many French and British leaders did fine service throughout those colossal years, but after a long and cool study of the evidence, one naturally reaches the conviction that the British Commander-in-Chief was the most indispensable of all."

Yet with all his military attainments, with all the glory that would accrue to the Generalissimo of immense armies engaged in a gigantic struggle, Sir Douglas Haig nobly played up to his own motto : " Service, not Self." He had long known that in Whitehall and Paris there had been efforts tending towards a unity of command, but naturally he had been reluctant to place the British Army under French control, especially in view of the many proofs of a divergence in aim and policy, which made him sceptical about the possible advantages. But now he was convinced that there were dangers that outweighed all other considerations, and, pushing his own ambitions into the background, he consented to subordinate himself to Foch, otherwise he believed the Allied cause was lost. He had a great personal knowledge of the various French generals, and it was at his suggestion that the supreme command was given to Foch.

" In a word, it was Haig's genius, exercised at this crucial moment, that won the Great War, in the sense that the

co-ordination of the Allies' resistance defeated Germany's supreme and final effort.

On March 27 the Germans took Montdidier, but before they could reach Amiens they were stopped by the joint efforts of the British, French and American troops. The last-named were now being embarked for France at the rate of more than 200,000 men per month.

A fresh enemy attack began on April 9 near Armentières, resulting in their capture of Messines Ridge and Kemmel Hill, that put the defence of Ypres in jeopardy. The British position was one of extreme danger, not only in that ghastly salient but elsewhere. At no time had matters appeared to be more desperate, if not hopeless. The troops were worn out, and perchance were losing faith, and a great impetus was required to get the last ounce of resistance out of them. It was in those dark days that the character of their leader, his professional ability, and his steadfastness in purpose were put to the supreme test, and nobly did he respond. He knew his men. He knew how to flick energy into lagging steps and determination into drooping spirits. He issued an Order of the Day, addressed to "All Ranks of the British Army in France and Flanders," which must rank in history alongside that of Lord Nelson at Trafalgar. It read :

"Three weeks ago to-day, the enemy began his terrific attacks against us on a fifty mile front. His objects are to separate us from the French, to take the Channel Ports, and to destroy the British Army.

"In spite of throwing already 106 divisions into the battle, and enduring the most reckless sacrifice of human life, he has, as yet, made little progress towards his goals.

"We owe this to the determined fighting and self-sacrifice of our troops. Words fail me to express the admiration which I feel for the splendid resistance offered by all ranks of our Army under the most trying circumstances.

"Many amongst us now are tired. To those I would say that victory will belong to the side which holds out the longest. The French Army is moving rapidly and in great force to our support.

"There is no other course open to us but to fight it out. Every position must be held to the last man; there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall, and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the freedom of mankind depend alike upon the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment.

*"D. Haig, F.M.*

*"Thursday, 11th April, 1918."*

That inspired message from their leader was like a trumpet-call to the troops. His detractors had whispered to them that his sole idea was to throw the youth of Britain into hopeless and bloody battles. They knew better than that, and they responded to Haig's desperate appeal with the noblest devotion ever exhibited by soldiers, in any period and on any battle-field in the world. Men of some nations would have felt the chill of death on reading that message, and would have accepted it as a tremendous warning to give up the fight. But these were Haig's men. They plunged afresh into the conflict with the dourness and enduringness of Haig himself.

We have need to give humble and reverent thanks that such a great and honourable soldier was raised up for the deliverance of Britain from her great peril.

Since the German offensive began, their casualties were not less than 500,000, in proof that the Allies struck back terribly hard. Our own killed and wounded were less serious, but the Germans had taken 100,000 prisoners. Our losses in material, owing to the retreat of the 5th Army, were enormous—one thousand guns, many of them heavy; 70,000 tons of gun ammunition; 250 million rounds of small-arm ammunition;

4,000 machine-guns and 200,000 rifles; 700 trench mortars; 200 tanks; great quantities of railway rolling stock; and 30 aerodromes. This devastating loss of material would largely cripple our efforts until the munition-makers at home could make good the losses.

In the third German offensive, which began in the last week in May, the enemy by sheer weight of numbers reached the Marne, where Foch's reserves brought them to a standstill.

By the middle of July the British Armies had been re-organised, and were again ready to take the offensive. On August 4, Sir Douglas Haig issued a General Order of the Day, that was very different in tone from the historic one of four months earlier. Part of it ran:

"The enemy's first and most powerful blows fell on the British. His superiority of force was nearly three to one. Although he succeeded in pressing back parts of the fronts attacked, the British line remained unbroken. After many days of heroic fighting, the glory of which will live for all time in the history of our race, the enemy was held.

"At the end of four years of war, the magnificent fighting qualities and spirit of our troops remain of the highest order. I thank them for the devoted bravery and unshaken resolution with which they responded to my appeal at the height of the struggle, and I know that they will show a like steadfastness and courage in whatever task they may yet be called upon to perform."

His confidence was not misplaced, for on August 8 the British 4th Army, supported by the French 3rd, at the Battle of Amiens, burst through the German front with a tank attack. They penetrated to a distance of ten miles in a single day. Between them the British and French captured 700 guns and took 33,000 prisoners. It was one of the greatest successes ever gained by the Allied arms on the Western



Front. Ludendorff, who was commanding the German operations, told his Government that a tank panic had set in among their infantry and that a German victory was no longer possible. Yet only a month earlier, he had reported that he was certain of forcing the Allies to sue for terms.

Unceasing fights at so many different points in the line make it difficult to select successes of special merit, or those that paved the way to something of greater magnitude; but the Commander-in-Chief considered the fight on the Ancre of particular importance, as related by himself in Swansea, when he paid a visit to that town after the war. He said : .

“ You sent many men to the Welch Regiment and to the 38th Division, among them the Swansea Service Battalion, the 14th Battalion Welch Regiment. You may well be proud of what they did and of the manner in which they upheld the honour of their town.

“ The 38th Division has a long record of service tracing the story of the war from the early days of the Somme, 1916, to the capture of Pilchem on the 31st July, 1917, the August fighting north of the Somme in 1918, and ultimately the final battle of the war when on the 4th November, 1918, the Welch battalions drove the enemy between one dawn and the next from one side of the Mormal Forest to the other.

“ I will select out of those two-and-a-half years of fighting one incident only, carried out by the 114th Brigade, comprised of three battalions of the Welch Regiment, one of them the 14th Service Battalion. It took place after the battle of the 8th August, 1918, when because of the stiffening of the German resistance on the front of that attack, I decided to deliver the next blow north of the Somme.

“ One brigade of the 38th Division crossed the Ancre at Albert during the early part of the night, and formed up on the narrow front the marshes left to them, ready to deliver the right-hand attack. The 114th Brigade on the left had a still more difficult task, for the flooded Ancre was in front of them.

"Many thanks are due to all ranks of the fighting forces for their indomitable spirit in defence, and their boldness in attack; to all commanders and their staff officers, under whose able direction such great results have been attained: and also to all those whose inspiring labours behind the actual fighting line have contributed essentially to our common success.

"To have commanded this splendid army, which at a time of grave crisis has so nobly done its duty, fills me with pride.

"We have passed many dark days together. Please God, these never will return. The enemy has now spent his effort and I rely confidently upon each one of you to turn to full advantage the opportunity which your skill, courage, and resolution have created."

The British infantry and the Tanks had been proving to be irresistible, and more than once the British and the Canadians, vying with each other with superb gallantry, performed almost startling feats in overrunning the line. The Australians, too, captured Mont St. Quentin in an irresistible style. Of all the German key positions Mont St. Quentin was one of the very strongest, defended on the south and west by the swamps of the Somme, and on the north by a low ridge that bristled with guns, and the place was held by one of the finest German Divisions, the 2nd Prussian Guards. They were instructed to hold the position at all costs because its capture would lead to the fall of Peronne, and the struggle back to the main Hindenburg Line would of necessity be something in the nature of a rout.

Sir Henry Rawlinson, in command of the British 4th Army, allotted the difficult task to the Australian Corps, who had covered themselves with glory a dozen times in Gallipoli, and in battles on the Somme and around Ypres. For fury of assault and reckless valour they had no superiors in the whole British Army.

Sir John Monash, the Australian Commander, in the darkness

of the night, set a brigade of the 2nd Australian Division to cross the Somme and seize the German trenches at Cléry, which difficult operation was carried out according to programme. At dawn the Australian 2nd Division lay just under the ridge, the 3rd Division was on its left, and on its right was the 5th Division, south of the Somme. While the 2nd Division attacked Mont St. Quentin, the 3rd would attempt to seize the high ground on the north, and the 5th Division would endeavour to get troops over the river in order to assault Peronne.

Sir Henry Rawlinson did not hesitate to express his doubts whether the Australians could carry out their plans, that appeared to be almost presumptuous, but, anxious not to damp their ardour, told them to go ahead and try. Although they had no tanks to assist them and only a few heavy guns, by 8 a.m. the Australians had got a footing on Mont St. Quentin, and by nightfall desperate counter-attacks of the enemy had failed to oust them. The final success came on September 1, the carrying of Peronne by the 14th Brigade being a particularly spirited performance. This Brigade had been considering itself unfortunate in being the reserve unit of its Division, for the time being relieved of any serious fighting. This day they amply atoned for having been out of harness for a short period. "You see," explained a company commander afterwards, "we had been trying to buy a fight off the other fellows for a matter of three weeks, and that day we got what we had been looking for, and made the most of it."

The capture of Mont St. Quentin was accomplished by two brigades that relied almost solely upon the bayonet. It was the cream of one army against the cream of the other, and the headlong retreat of the enemy told its own story. Sir Henry Rawlinson said that the exploit of the Australians in capturing Mont St. Quentin was the most brilliant single action in the war.

The German aim had been to hold on to their key positions

long enough to allow them to withdraw in good order to the Hindenburg Line, where they proposed to stand on the defence for the winter, during which time they could reorganise in readiness for another huge counter-stroke in the spring that would turn the tide in their favour.

The advent of October found the Germans on the great line which Hindenburg had devised in 1916. To break it would be a most formidable task, especially as the British troops had been fighting heavily all the summer, and it was a moot point whether rest was not almost imperative, during which they could consolidate their gains in readiness for the spring campaign. The French generals were in favour of that course ; the British Government left the responsibility to Field-Marshal Haig, who was quite aware that failure would almost assuredly result in his being superseded. Nevertheless, he was not in doubt what to do. The enemy was badly shaken, if not demoralised, and with complete faith in himself and in his men, he would not relax the attack—and in the event he shortened the war by six months or more, thus saving innumerable lives and avoiding squandering further immense wealth.

September had been a terribly black month for Germany. In addition to being pressed back by the British, French, Belgians, and Americans all along the Western Front from west of Metz to the sea, Austria and Bulgaria were tottering, and Turkey was being soundly trounced for treacherously allying herself with Germany in 1914.

Field-Marshal Haig, having made his momentous decision, received every assistance from Foch, who was speedily aware that Haig's judgment was right, for all through October the British offensive was maintained with an ardour and impetuosity that more and more the Germans failed to withstand. In the middle of the month the King, who had visited the Front upon several occasions, sent the following message to the Commander-in-Chief :

*The magnificent advance of the Armies under your command, powerfully supported by our American comrades, and opposed by a retreating but stubborn foe, and against the most formidable defences which human ingenuity and strength could devise, fill me with admiration, pride, and gratitude. These sentiments will be shared by the people of the Empire, and in their name I, from my heart, congratulate you and all ranks.*

George I.R.

Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig replied :

*The gracious message of congratulation which your Majesty has been good enough, in your own name and in that of the people of the Empire, to send to your Armies in France and to our American comrades operating with us, has filled us all with gratitude and pride. All ranks are delighted to have received this commendation from their King, and join with me in begging your Majesty to accept our heartfelt thanks and the expression of our earnest determination to continue to deserve your confidence.*

The final victory, which was no longer in doubt, came with unexpected but welcome suddenness. "By bursting through the great Hindenburg system," summarised General Sir F. Maurice, "which every German believed to be impregnable, he wrung from Ludendorff, the first panic appeal for an armistice, and, following this great victory with blow after blow, he ended the war, as he had begun it, on the field of Mons. In these glorious three months he captured 190,000 prisoners, 3,600 guns, and machine-guns, trench mortars, and military stores beyond count."

The war came to an end with the Armistice of November 11, and with it the toll of death and maiming and the expenditure of wealth that nearly bankrupted all the participants with the exception of America. Great Britain mourned 743,700

dead, and the Dominions beyond the Seas, 140,920 ; and the wounded were 1,693,260 and 357,780 respectively. India's dead were 61,390 and wounded 70,860. The monetary cost to Great Britain was £11,076,000,000 and the Dominions and India more than one-fifth as much.

The total killed on all fields in the armies of the Allies and the Enemy Countries numbered more than seven millions and the wounded were twice as many. This, after two thousand years of Christianity. Edmund Burke wrote : " The blood of man should never be shed but to redeem the blood of man. It is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our country, for our God, for our kind—the rest is vanity ; the rest is crime." Our war obligations were, we believe, in accordance with those great precepts, but God send that the seed we sowed in sacrifice and pain will bear fruit that will obviate the world ever seeing again such a frightful holocaust.

Sir Douglas Haig issued a Special Order of the Day to the troops in France for Christmas Day, which was a very welcome Christmas card for Mr. Thomas Atkins, who at one time might very well have been excused for doubting whether there remained anything good in the whole wide world. The message ran :

*This Christmas Day sees our united efforts crowned with a glorious victory.*

*I desire to wish all ranks of the Armies under my command a very happy Christmas and a brighter and happier New Year.*

*The self-sacrifice, endurance, and devotion to duty of our troops have gained the admiration of the whole world, and at this time, when everything is being done to accelerate demobilisation, I feel sure that the same splendid qualities which have carried us through the past years of war will help us and strengthen us in reconstructing our Empire.*

*My thoughts are with you all on this memorable Christmas Day, and I wish you God-speed.*

*D. Haig.*

A fortnight later (January 7, 1919) the Commander-in-Chief in his Victory despatch paid glowing tribute to the courage and endurance of the troops in feeling terms, all the more precious because they were penned by a man who never used a superfluous word, and whose praise was as rare as it was sincere. The following is an extract from the historic document :

“In three months of epic fighting the British Armies in France have brought to a sudden and dramatic end the great wearing-out battle of the past four years.

“In our admiration for this outstanding achievement, the long years of patient and heroic struggle by which the strength and spirit of the enemy were gradually broken down cannot be forgotten. The strain of those years was never-ceasing, the demands they made upon the best of the Empire's manhood are now known.

“Yet throughout all those years, and amid the hopes and disappointments they brought with them, the confidence of our troops in final victory never wavered. Their courage and resolution rose superior to every test, their cheerfulness never failing however terrible the conditions in which they lived and fought. By the long road they trod with so much faith and with such devoted and self-sacrificing bravery we have arrived at victory, and to-day they have their reward.”

In all the Commander-in-Chief's despatches he studiously omitted references that would indicate the part he himself had played in victory; but Foch did not hesitate to write that, “The victory was thanks above all to the unselfishness, to the wise, loyal and energetic policy of Field-Marshal Haig, who

made easy a great combination and sanctioned a prolonged and mighty effort."

Mr. John Buchan, in his "History of the Great War," remarks of the British Commander-in-Chief that, "The campaign—nay, the history of war—has produced no finer figure: great in patience, courtesy, unselfishness, serenity, and iron courage amid reverses and delays. He showed high military talent, but he showed a character which was beyond talent, and, since war in the last resort is a conflict of spirit, the finer spirit prevailed.

Sir Douglas Haig held High Command for a longer period than any other Commander-in-Chief in the Allied or any of the opposing armies.

"Here had been, mark, the General-in-Chief,  
Thro' a whole campaign of the world's life and death,  
Doing the King's work all the dim day long."



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FRUITS OF VICTORY

THE fate of nations had been in the balance for four wearying blood-sodden years ; the world was in chaos ; civilisation was in peril ; and the guns thundered on the far-flung battle fronts, where Death unceasingly reaped his ghastly harvest.

Now the tumult was stilled. Time would have to elapse before the place of Field-Marshal Haig could be definitely assigned among the galaxy of great British soldiers, but he was at least the man who was instrumental in enabling Peace to spread her wings over a stricken world—and his countrymen desired to see the conqueror to whom they owed an everlasting debt of gratitude.

Sir Douglas Haig paid a flying visit to England on December 19, and London gave him a magnificent reception in the course of a military procession to Buckingham Palace, where the Field-Marshal had an audience with the King, and was entertained at luncheon. On his way to the Palace Sir Douglas Haig, paid his respects to Queen Alexandra, who had never ceased to take an interest in his career. That same night the good people of Kingston-on-Thames escorted their hero in a torch-light procession to his home on Kingston Hill.

Even before the War Field-Marshal Haig had been the recipient of many of his country's honours, and now for his conspicuous military services the Allied countries showered upon him their symbols of high appreciation. France made him a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour ; Tsarist Russia, the

Order of St. George ; Serbia, the Order of Karageorge, and Rumania, the Order of Michael the Brave.

From Portugal he received the Order of the Tower and Sword ; from America, the Cross of Honour and the Distinguished Service Medal ; from Japan, the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun, and from China the Order of Chia Ho. Italy awarded him the Order of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus, and Panama the Gold Medal a La Solidaridad.

Twelve Universities gave him honorary degrees, including Oxford, where his old college, Brasenose, had already made him an honorary Fellow. He was installed as Rector of St. Andrews and was later elected Chancellor.

His Majesty the King bestowed upon him the Order of Merit, which is limited to twenty-four British members.

Many cities and boroughs conferred on him their honorary freedom, and everywhere he went he told his great audiences how their own territorial soldiers had acquitted themselves under his command, and never did he fail to urge the claims of the ex-Service men. When he received the Freedom of the City of London, which was accompanied by a sword of honour, he made a very powerful appeal for those whom the war had ousted from civil life, the very men who had preserved it.

The Peace Day Procession through London was a great historic occasion. All arms and all ranks were represented in the cavalcade, and among those distinguished officers who had led our armies and fleets to victory not the least notable figure was that of Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig.

The following incident is evidence of the sympathetic kindness of Haig's character. After the procession, he paid a visit to Lord Haldane, with whom he had always been on terms of closest friendship. He wished to make him a present of a book in which he had written something. It was a copy of "War Despatches," and on the fly-leaf he had written : "Haig's Despatches—To Viscount Haldane of Cloan, the greatest

Secretary for War England has ever had. In grateful remembrance of his successful efforts in organising our military forces for a war on the Continent, notwithstanding much opposition from his Army Council and the half-hearted support of his Parliamentary friends.—Haig, F.M.”

On August 6, 1919, a vote, including £100,000 to Sir Douglas Haig, was moved in the House of Commons by Mr. Lloyd George, then Prime Minister, who said :—His tenacity of purpose, his dauntlessness in the face of what looked like disaster, make him an embodiment of the race which is so proud to claim him amongst its sons. But there is another quality of Sir Douglas Haig, which is known well only to those who know him well, and that is the readiness with which he has always been prepared to subordinate self to the demands of his country. That was never more clearly manifested than in the way in which he accepted the command of Field-Marshal Foch over the British forces which hitherto had been commanded by Sir Douglas Haig. There have been great men in the past who have rendered distinguished service to their country in this and in other lands, and who never hesitated to risk their lives in rendering that service, but who, somehow, failed in loyalty when it was a question of personal pride or professional pride. Sir Douglas Haig has been as ready to sacrifice his own pride of position as he has always been to run the risk of his life. For that especially we honour and respect him. After all, modesty adds a cubit to the stature of the tallest man.

Mr. W. Adamson (then Leader of the Labour Opposition).—I want to pay my tribute to Sir Douglas Haig for the invaluable service he has rendered in presenting the claims of the Service men, particularly in the rank and file.

Major-General Sir John Davidson.—Sir Douglas Haig has hitherto refused to accept any honour until he saw that the men and officers were being properly and adequately treated.

Sir Douglas Haig was created Earl Haig, Viscount Dawick, and Baron Haig of Bemersyde, Co. Roxburgh. The supporters

which he chose for his coat of arms were a mounted trooper of the 7th Hussars, and a mounted lancer of the 17th Lancers.

In 1921, in recognition of his services in the War, the people of the British Empire presented him with the house and fishings of Bemersyde, to the historic title of which he succeeded as the 29th Laird.

Earl Haig's connection with the Scottish Grand Lodge of Freemasons dated back to when, as the son of a Past Master in Elgin's Lodge at Leven, he was made an entered apprentice Freemason nearly forty-eight years ago. Later, owing to being engaged in following his military career, he described himself as a "lost apprentice." Not until after the War did the distinguished soldier again present himself as "a humble brother seeking more instruction." Having completed the degrees, he was elected R.W.M. in 1925, and in December, 1927, the Lodge presented him with a Past-Master's apron and jewel. He consented for the newly-chartered Lodge at Windygates to register the name "Earl Haig," and at the same time presented the Lodge with the sword he carried in France.

Since the War, Earl Haig was present at three notable funeral services in London that of necessity touched him to his core. He saw the body of the Unknown Warrior—the pathetic representative of those in the Empire's Armies who had made the supreme sacrifice—laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, that venerable casket of the nation's illustrious dead. In 1922 Earl Haig and Lord Ypres (the title assumed by Sir John French when he was raised to the peerage) acted as pall-bearers, when the late Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, the Commander of the 4th Army on the Western Front, was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. In May, 1925, Lord Ypres himself passed away and Earl Haig was the King's representative at the funeral service that was conducted with great military splendour in Westminster Abbey. Earl Haig and Prince Arthur of Connaught walked at the head of the mourners.

Earl Haig was a notable figure in the first Cenotaph ceremony, as he was in later ones, when he led the members of the British Legion to pay their homage to the Glorious Dead at the Empire's shrine, set in the heart of the capital, that has many monuments commemorative of heroic achievements which have shrunk into history, but none so soul-stirring as this dignified token of the Empire's grief for those who died that the Empire might not sink into ruin, if not oblivion.

Earl Haig visited many cities and towns that had conferred their honours upon him; and it was upon these occasions when his innate goodness and modesty shone out most clearly, for he shunned the limelight for himself, and always passed over the expressions of gratitude to those who had served under him in the cause of the nation and the Empire.

Of all the visits he paid in England—remembering that his beloved Scotland had the warmest corner in his heart—those to Bristol perhaps afforded him most personal pleasure because of his early associations with the city.

In April, 1920, Earl Haig was accorded the Freedom of the city, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws at the University, and was admitted to the honorary Freedom of the Society of Merchant Venturers.

In his speech Earl Haig recalled his schooldays in Bristol, and alluding to the city's romantic past said, Bristol had contributed greatly, not only to the glory of Britain, but to the knowledge, the development, and the civilisation of the world. Westcountrymen, and men of this city not least among them, upheld in the Great War the record of a fighting and adventurous past. Battalions of the Gloucestershire Regiment had served with distinction in many divisions under his command in France. Future generations of Bristol men who wished to sound the glories and extol the reputation of their city would not need to hark back to the reign of Henry VIII. or to the days of the Armada. They need dive no deeper into history than the years

of the Great War to find all the honour and all the glory of which this or any other city could boast.

In 1922 Earl Haig was elected President of Clifton College, where a few months later he went to open the College War Memorial to the memory of 3,063 Old Cliftonians who served, and 578 who fell in the War. Earl Haig paid a fine tribute to those who had fallen, concluding his remarks with the words :

“Tanks, guns, and aeroplanes would not have sufficed to bring us victory in the Great War if the character of our people had been other than it was. In the years you are spending here at my old school, you are all of you building up your own characters, and helping to form the characters of others. Let your actions and thoughts be worthy of the burden you will one day have to bear as citizens of the greatest Empire, that has ever taken manliness, liberty, and justice for its purpose and ideals. I unveil this memorial to the memory of gallant members of Clifton College who carried that burden before you, and have shown us how it should be borne.”

In the evening of his splendid life Earl Haig came to rest after stormy days among his own people, his reward after toil the companionship of his wife and children and the peaceful joys of his estate. He displayed the greatest pride in the improvement of Bemersyde, the gift of which he had described as “truly princely generosity,” and he exhibited a cheerful and inspiring interest in his tenantry.

The children of Earl and Countess Haig are four in number. Their only son, George Alexander Eugène Douglas, Viscount Dawick, was born on March 15, 1918, three days before the great German offensive against the British 3rd and 5th Armies. The King was the boy's principal godfather, and Queen Alexandra and the Empress Eugenie were his godmothers. The christening ceremony was performed

by the Rev. John Sims, C.M.G., principal Chaplain to the Forces in France, and Honorary Chaplain to the King.

Their daughters are Lady Alexandra Henrietta Louise, born in 1907, for whom Queen Alexandra was sponsor; Lady Victoria Doris Rachel, born in 1908, for whom Princess Victoria was sponsor; and Lady Irene Violet Janet Haig, born in 1919.

With Lady Haig and his daughters, the Earl entered in the fullest degree into the social life of the district. He hunted with the Duke of Buccleuch's Foxhounds; he engaged in salmon fishing on the Tweed; and golfed over the neighbouring courses of the Melrose and Torwoodlee Golf Clubs. He had taken up golf soon after the War and often played on the Coombe Hill course, Surrey, in company with "Sandy" Herd, the club professional. In the club-house hangs a picture of the great soldier standing by the side of Herd. In 1920 Earl Haig was elected captain of the Royal and Ancient Club of St. Andrew's, and, following the established custom, he opened his year of occupation of one of the most honoured positions in golf by driving off the first tee, to the accompaniment of a booming gun. He was a "handicap 12" golfer.

While in residence at Bemersyde, Earl Haig was a frequent visitor to Edinburgh. On a sunny forenoon he might be seen slowly strolling along in sober civilian garb, so that many passed and jostled him without being aware of his identity, until one heard a whisper, "Look! There's Haig." Upon one occasion, accompanied by Lady Haig and the family, the Earl went to the Castle Esplanade to view the equestrian statue in his honour. Unrecognised, the Earl was peremptorily stopped by the sentry who asked why he had not paid the admission fee. Haig at once repaired to the pay-box, paid for his party and, still unrecognised, went on his round of inspection.

The following incident admirably exemplifies the modest simplicity of the great hero. He was in a district in Scotland with which he was not familiar, and asked the chauffeur of a passing car to direct him. "I seem to know your face, sir," said the man. "Possibly," was the answer. "My name is Haig, and I served in the war." That simple phrase was testimony to a noble unaffectedness.

Taking up the cause of the ex-Service men debarred Earl Haig from enjoying his home life at Bemersyde to the extent he desired, but having put his hand to the plough he went on with his furrow with the thoroughness that marked all his actions, great and small.

Bemersyde has peculiar charms all its own. It crowns a rocky plateau from whence may be had a glorious view of the Tweed stretching from Abbotsford to the Cheviots. The older portion of the mansion consists of a tall, narrow, castellated tower, with high crow-stepped gables in the style of the later sixteenth century. The Peel Tower now bears a plaque with an inscription, recognising Earl Haig's "distinguished services to humanity in a cause which, by Divine Grace victorious, has triumphed in support of right and justice." For his study the Field-Marshal selected a room at the top of the tower.

The social rank and influence of the owners of the estate are shown by the fact that the Haigs are one of three families that from time immemorial have had the right of burial in St. Mary's Aisle in Dryburgh Abbey, the other two being the Erskines of Shielfield, and the Haliburtons of Newmains (now extinct), who were ancestors of Sir Walter Scott. To the great poet a "wizard spell" hung over Bemersyde. He loved to stroll past the ancestral home of the Haigs. On the occasion of his last visit in September, 1831, he was accompanied by Turner, being resolved, Lockhart informs us, upon having a



fitting memorial of this historic Border-keep by the graceful hand of the distinguished painter.

Lockhart was one of the party and he adds: "The good laird and lady were, of course, flattered with this fondness of respect and after walking about a little while among the huge old trees that surrounded the tower, we ascended to, I think, the third tier of its vaulted apartments, and had luncheon in a stately hall, arched also in stone, but with well-sized windows . . . , duly blazoned with shields and crests, and the time-honoured motto, 'Betyde, Betyde.'" Turner's sketch of Bemersyde was first reproduced in the 1833 edition of Scott's "Poetical Works."

Earl Haig not only spent much time in travelling about the country in furtherance of the aims of the British Legion, he also went to South Africa and Canada, and had promised to visit Australia. Lady Haig accompanied him to Canada and they greatly enjoyed the tour. On the occasion of the Jubilee celebrations at Calgary, they both dressed as cowboys and led the procession through the streets. During the visit the Field-Marshal annexed another honour—an unusual one. He was installed Chief of the Sarcee Indian tribe, with the name of "Bullhead."

In one of his speeches in the Dominion, Earl Haig said: "We are not such fools as to believe we have reached any Utopian plane. Rather do we believe in a strong man armed. We of all people know the horrors of war, and I believe, if we develop that great league of nations known as the Commonwealth of the British Empire, we shall have done the most we can to demolish the possibility of future wars."

On the homeward journey in the Anchor-Donaldson liner *Leititia*, Lord and Lady Haig joined spiritedly in the deck games, and the Earl won a keenly contested tennis competition.

When resident in London Earl Haig was frequently to be seen taking a brisk constitutional in the Park. He did so on Sunday, January 29. If those who saw him had been blessed with second sight, they would have taken a longer look at him than usual.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE BRITISH LEGION

FIELD-MARSHAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG returned home with the laurels of victory on his brow, able to claim any appointment in the gift of his fellow-countrymen ; he was mentioned as a possible Viceroy of India. But he had decided on what course to pursue, namely, to devote himself to the interests of ex-Service officers and men. Victory had been won by the blood and agony of thousands of British soldiers, many of whom had come home maimed in body, often broken in mind, and unable to see any opening for themselves in the civil life from which duty had wrested them to follow the Flag. Almost from the moment the clash of battle ceased, Sir Douglas Haig made himself the champion of those who had served under him and, day in day out, he advocated their claims to the remembrance of their countrymen.

When he was called as a witness before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Pensions, he expressed his views in most unmistakable terms, characterising the treatment of war heroes, in some cases, as inhuman and scandalous. The conduct of the State towards the disabled had appalled him, and he pleaded for more generous provision for officers placed on half-pay and for their wives and children. The disability rates for both officers and men he condemned as totally inadequate, especially in the case of men suffering from gas-poisoning, shell-shock, and neurasthenia.

He was not content with mere lip-service to the cause he

espoused, he made it known that he was unwilling to receive any reward himself until he was satisfied that the officers and men who had fought under him were to be fairly treated, and pensions raised to a level commensurate with the cost of living. In March, 1919, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in Great Britain, but the office was abolished in a few months, and he devoted all his time to securing the welfare of the demobilised soldier, the widow, and the orphan.

Even before the Armistice the Commander-in-Chief was considering the problem of the ex-Service men. He believed that it was desirable that the officers of all ranks, who had led the Army in the field, should remain as the men's counsellors and helpers in the after-war days, when inevitably there would be difficulty in restoring all the soldiers to civilian life; and to that end he founded the Officers' Association.

Speedily other self-help organisations came into existence, of which the chief were, the Comrades of the Great War, the National Association of Discharged Sailors and Soldiers, and the National Federation of Discharged and Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers. The first-named body included a considerable number of officers and had fairly substantial funds; the second, which was short of funds, had by far the greatest number of members, among whom were men holding extreme views on social and political matters, and the manner in which they should enforce their "rights"; the third organisation was of less strength than its fellow-societies and it did not voice its claims with any particular vehemence.

In seeking to attain their objects these three men's associations were rivals for members and influence; there was considerable overlapping, with consequent waste of money, and there was an increasing danger of developing political views with a tendency towards extremism.

The Field-Marshal, who had now been created an Earl, perceived a potential danger in hundreds of thousands of disillusioned

ex-Service men, who had not yet shaken off the habits of war, swelling the ranks of the unemployed. Unless they had the advantage of genuine leadership there would arise a great civil commotion—if not armed revolution. Fortunately, he was afforded the opportunity to intervene in a friendly and unostentatious manner. Each of the rival associations sought his consent to act as their President, but he absolutely refused to accede, until they amalgamated in unity, comradeship, and peace. At the Horse Guards he saw some of the extremist leaders, and in the end, largely as an effect of his wise counsels, the British Legion came into being. By the magic of his personality he transformed a movement that might very easily have gone disastrously astray into a great national and Imperial organisation, non-political, non-sectarian, and imbued with the right spirit of our Empire.

The British Legion of to-day is not only the champion of the ex-Service men throughout the Empire, but it has the highest national ideals. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales is its Patron, himself an ex-Service man, and the first of his Royal House to see active service since George II. fought at the battle of Dettingen in 1743. Earl Haig was the first President; the Vice-Presidents include a number of distinguished admirals and generals, the Earl of Derby, the Right Hon. Viscount Lascelles, and others; there is a strong National Executive Council; and the officers are capable, sympathetic, and eminently fitted for the onerous duties they have undertaken.

Poppy Day, which is Armistice Day, was instituted by Earl Haig in 1921 as a means of raising the money needed to assist more than 300,000 officers and men whose pensions are no longer payable, and for more than twice as many men on the unemployed register of the Ministry of Labour. How readily the public has responded on Poppy Day may be seen from the results: In 1921 the receipts were £106,000, which were doubled the next year, and in 1926 rose to £435,000. In six

years the Poppy Day appeal brought in a gross amount of £1,749,000.

One of the most satisfactory features of Poppy Day is the fact that every poppy sold is entirely the handiwork of disabled ex-Service men, 240 of whom find regular employment in the British Legion Poppy Factory at Richmond, Surrey, and about forty in Lady Haig's Poppy Factory at Edinburgh. None but British materials are used, and Poppy Day therefore may justly claim to give indirect employment on a large scale.

At the Poppy factories in a single year the employees have turned out nearly 30 millions of poppies that called for the use of about 70 miles of silk, 245 miles of lawn and similar material, 900 miles of green fringe for winding round the stems of the poppies, and 1,500 miles of fine wire.

Every British Legion poppy has a metal centre which carries in relief and polished, the words "Haig's Fund," and the public should refuse to purchase spurious poppies that are commercially manufactured for private gain.

His Majesty the King directs that the wreaths laid by him on the Cenotaph on Remembrance Day should be made in the British Legion Poppy Factory, that can supply wreaths at prices to suit every purse. For a trifling extra charge the Legion also undertakes to place tributes of Flanders Poppies on any War Memorial in the British Isles or on any War Grave on the Western Front. Orders for such wreaths can be placed with any branch of the British Legion; and copies of the wreath catalogue will be sent immediately upon application to the Organising Secretary, Earl Haig's British Legion Appeal Fund, 26, Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1.

Poppy Day is a solemn observance among Britons overseas, whether within the Empire or in foreign lands. The Flanders poppy has blazed a vivid trail, stretching from its own native fields right round the world, encircling the globe like a vast scarlet wreath. In every part of the world where Britons are

gathered together, it speaks its message of remembrance and service—remembrance of the sacrifice of a million young British lives laid down in the cause of liberty and service to those who, years after the signing of the Armistice, are yet struggling with the consequences of the world upheaval of 1914-1918.

Poppy Day is widely observed aboard ship and many quite large collections have accrued to the Fund through the efforts of the captains and pursers owing to the facilities given them by the Shipping Companies.

In the last public appeal made by Field-Marshal Earl Haig, K.T., he said :

“To-day brings another anniversary of the Armistice that ended the Great War. It is a day dedicated to remembrance. By the two minutes’ silence millions remember and honour those who died. By responding to the Poppy Day appeal of the British Legion, remembrance of those who returned from active service only to suffer ill-fortune in an industrial struggle which has been intensified by the prolonged depression in many trades can be associated with practical help.”

The activities of the British Legion to which the monies subscribed by the public are devoted cover a wide field. The relief of distress is supplemented by valuable constructive work in the finding of employment, the granting of loans free of interest to enable businesses to be established, the provision of means for men to emigrate, and in many other ways. Assistance and advice are given on questions relating to pensions. Children are helped with their education so that they may have a fair start in life. Free legal advice is given on housing and similar matters.

Each of the thirteen area organisations of the British Legion has its special machinery for dealing with unemployment, while the many branches have employment committees which maintain registers and do useful work in placing men. When these committees cannot find work they notify their cases to the

area headquarters. Many firms use the Legion bureaux, but there is not the general recourse to them that could be wished. It is possible that the extent of unemployment among ex-Service men has not been realised ; or that employers are in doubt as to the prospects of engaging suitable workers through the Legion. Actually large numbers of men of a really good type are registered, and from their ranks positions in practically any trade or profession could be filled.

The Pensions Department of the Legion continues to do work of great value. Since it was started the headquarters section alone has dealt with over 300,000 cases, and many others have received attention through the Areas. The cases have relieved the Appeal Fund of numerous demands through the transference to the proper authorities of legal obligations which otherwise would have to be borne by private bounty.

The Legion, in co-operation with the British Empire Service League, has given serious attention to emigration, and up to the spring of last year 447 men, 337 women, and 873 children had been sent out to various parts of the Empire and assisted in their settlement. Apart from the help given in individual cases, a special scheme was recently carried through by which about 25 men were selected for a course of training intended to fit them to undertake farming in Canada. The wives of the men were at the same time prepared for life in a new country by receiving instruction in those domestic accomplishments essential to the change of conditions.

It is to be regretted that the need for the Relief Department of the Legion remains so urgent. Distress in the main is due to unemployment, and it is estimated that more than 2,000,000 cases have been assisted, at a cost of over £700,000. This is apart from the provision of meals, lodging, and other help for men who are homeless and without any means of support. In various ways the Central Relief Committee had expended up to the end of March this year nearly £1,000,000.



In closing his annual appeal Earl Haig observed that in addition to generous financial help personal service is an absolute need if the great work is to be continued. Alas, it was the last appeal the Founder of Poppy Day would make, for in less than three months he passed away, leaving the memory of his own self-sacrificing service as an example and an inspiration to those who will carry on the work now that he has gone.

The Prince of Wales broadcasted an appeal on behalf of the Poppy Day Fund for ex-Service men. The following are brief extracts from his heart-stirring remarks :

“I know how many of my listeners are sad to-night over someone they lost in the Great War. I can assure them all of my sincere sympathy and that I am thinking of them ; but I am also thinking of the sufferings which have been borne ever since the Armistice by thousands of the men who survived the Great War, survived it not to live a life of useful work, of prosperity, and of happiness, but who from no fault of their own are not able to live but can only exist.

“The first time Lord Haig asked you to help was in 1921, when £106,000 came in as the result of the sale of the poppies, and in each successive year the amount has steadily increased by an average of about £60,000, till last year the magnificent sum of £435,000 was collected. This has been a wonderful increase, and proves that unemployed ex-Service men and their dependents are still remembered, and with a depth of sympathy which shows no signs of waning with the passing of the years.

“We bought so many poppies last year and so nearly reached the total of £500,000 that surely we can do a little better this year and realise the half-million to-morrow. So will each one of you give a little more for your poppy than you did last year, maybe give even a little more than you can afford, remembering that if it is a sacrifice it is a small one compared with theirs, and that in so giving we are keeping alive that spirit of unselfish comradeship in which they so willingly went away and gave of their best, and some of them even of their all ? Good night, everybody,

and in the name of those dear ones we have lost and for the sake of those still with us, but in such crying need, I ask you to be very generous to-morrow."

Earl Haig was deeply interested in the welfare of Irish ex-Service men, especially those in Southern Ireland. He had recently sent Colonel Crosfield to inquire into the distress which existed among many of the Irish soldiers who had fought under him, and a scheme is afoot, in connection with the British Legion (Irish Free State), to found a relief scheme in the shape of a wood-working industry, something on the lines of the Lord Roberts' Memorial Workshops.

Although the institution of the British Legion was essentially the work of Earl Haig, he gathered around him a devoted band who consider it a sacred duty to watch over and nurture the great legacy he left to them.

It was a matter for congratulation by ex-Service men that Admiral of the Fleet Earl Jellicoe consented to act as President of the British Legion in succession to its distinguished founder. He has great powers of organisation and of his sympathetic interest there will never be any doubt.

At a great meeting at the Mansion House on March 2, it was decided to make a national appeal for a Memorial to Field-Marshal Earl Haig which should take the form of the provision of Homes for ex-Service men who are getting old, that Lady Haig has stated was a subject dear to her husband's heart. Eloquent speeches were made by the Prince of Wales, the Prime Minister and others, and there is no doubt that the Memorial will be worthy of the great Christian hero with whose name it will for ever be associated.

## CHAPTER X

### THE DEATH OF EARL HAIG

#### THE TRIBUTE OF LONDON, BRITAIN, AND THE EMPIRE

THE sudden and wholly unexpected demise of a great Warrior Chief struck the nation almost with the intensity of a physical blow. During the agonising years when we were confronted by the mightiest military machine that had ever been conceived, the Commander of the British armies on the Western Front was almost hidden in the fog of war. Comparatively few of the millions of soldiers, whose movements he arranged and controlled from his headquarters at Montreuil, ever saw the one on whose shoulders lay the heaviest responsibility any British leader had ever been called upon to bear; and to the public he was almost a mythical being—yet, withal, the one on whose skill, judgment and tenacity depended everything that made the life of the nation worth living.

But since the turmoil and stress and horrors of the long-drawn-out battles, we had learnt to estimate his great services, and his nobility of character had endeared him to his fellow-countrymen throughout the world.

On Friday, January 27, 1928, Earl Haig travelled from Scotland to London. On the following afternoon, accompanied by Countess Haig, he went to Cardigan House at Richmond to attend the enrolment ceremony of the 20th Richmond (Earl Haig's Own) Boy Scouts, which had been formed for the sons of

disabled ex-Service men employed at the British Legion Poppy Factory, who live on the factory's housing estate.

Earl Haig chatted to the Scouts and Cubs in his customary quiet but genial fashion, and afterwards made a speech that proved to be his last public utterance. He said :

“I wish to thank you very much for the very kind welcome you have accorded myself and Lady Haig. I have come to the enrolment ceremony and have become the patron of the troop because I want to encourage the British Legion spirit in the rising generation, and also because I wish to support the splendid work which has been carried on by the Scout movement which teaches boys to be good citizens and to be proud of being members of the British Empire.

“It is essential that the young should be taught the meaning of Empire and the sacrifices that their fathers have made for it.

“I ask you boys always to play the game and to try and realise what citizenship and public spirit really mean. When you grow up, always remember that you belong to the great Empire, and when people speak disrespectfully of England always stand up and defend your country.”

It was remarked that the Field-Marshal was not looking well ; he had consulted a doctor in Edinburgh only a few days earlier ; and proposed to see another medical man in London in order to learn whether he might travel to the Riviera.

Alas ! The Great Reaper intervened, and answered the question in that grim, inexorable manner from which there is no human appeal.

On Sunday night, when Earl Haig was retiring to rest at 21, Prince's Gate, he collapsed while sitting on the edge of the bed. He did not lose consciousness and did not realise that it was the end. Death, however, occurred very quickly before a doctor could be summoned. The only members of his family present were Captain Haig, his brother, and Mr. and Mrs.

W. G. Jameson, brother-in-law and sister, with whom he was staying. Countess Haig, who was with friends elsewhere in London, was so prostrated with grief on learning of the death of her husband, that she was unable to go to Prince's Gate until the following morning.

The cause of death was certified as sudden heart failure, the result of the effects of the war, and previous tropical and campaigning service, on the heart muscles.

It was generally assumed that Earl Haig would be buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, which is traditionally the place of sepulture of great soldiers and sailors. Nelson, Wellington, Lord Napier of Magdala, Earl Roberts, Viscount Wolseley, Sir Henry Wilson, and others are buried there. There are also memorials to gallant soldiers who were fated to lie in unmarked graves—Sir John Moore, who was buried at midnight at Corunna; the heroic Gordon, who died keeping his pathetic trust at Khartum; and Lord Kitchener, who went down on H.M.S. *Hampshire* during the War.

Earl Haig, however, was not to be treasured up in the heart core of London, nor in the Scottish war-shrine on the Castle Rock, Edinburgh, as had also been suggested, for he had expressed the wish to be laid to rest at Bemersyde. It was intensely characteristic of the great Field-Marshal, who had no liking for pomp and parade where he himself was concerned, that he should choose to be buried near the home of his ancestors, for which he had so great an affection—and naturally Countess Haig and his nearest relatives placed his own earnest wish above all other considerations.

The body of the dead Field-Marshal lay in state in St. Columba's (Church of Scotland), Pont Street. At each corner of the bier stood a soldier, almost statuesque, with bowed head, his hands, in white gauntlets, resting on his sword, drawn up in front of him. The first group of four men were from the Royal Horse Guards; men of other regiments shared in the

vigil, the guard being changed at intervals of every twenty minutes.

Before the admission of the general public, Countess Haig, in deep mourning and wearing a big Flanders poppy, entered the church and knelt in front of the coffin in silent devotion. In the course of three days many thousands of people passed the bier, paying silent respect to the great figure whose earthly career had come to an end with such dramatic suddenness. Three thousand wreaths were deposited in the church by the time the lying-in-state came to an end.

On the morning of February 3, the last rites accorded to one of the most chivalrous figures that had ever adorned British arms began with a service at St. Columba's. Earl Haig was an elder of the church until three years earlier, when he transferred his eldership to the parish of Mertoun, near St. Boswells, in Scotland. The congregation consisted only of relatives, personal friends, and members of the church—the spiritual family of which Earl Haig had been a devoted and greatly beloved adherent.

Although the War ended nearly ten years ago, there was one touching group of mourners still in hospital blue—maimed soldiers yet precluded from a return to civil life.

The service, conducted by Dr. Archibald Fleming, minister of St. Columba's, was marked by its utter absence of pomp, entirely in keeping with the unassuming demeanour of the departed. The organ gave forth the "Solemn Melody," "O rest in the Lord," and an old Scottish lament. There was no intoning of either prayer or reading, and, although the singing was led by black-robed choir-boys, it came from the whole congregation.

The body of Earl Haig reposed in the chancel beneath the flag whose dignity and honour it had been the mainstay of his life to support. On the chancel-steps were placed the insignia of his numerous Orders. Upon the flag lay his plumed hat, Field-

Marshal's bâton, and a great scarlet sword, the blade of Flanders poppies and the massive hilt of laurel. Two poppy wreaths were hanging at the foot of the coffin, and the chancel-floor around the catafalque was dotted vividly with single poppies.

The opening sentences of the burial service were followed by the prophecy of Micah—"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares"; the promise of Revelation, that those who have come out of great tribulation "shall serve God day and night in His temple"; thanks to the Almighty, for the dead hero's gifts as a soldier, his simplicity and courage, his loyalty and patriotism, his constant selflessness and care for others, "and that Thou didst raise him up in the time of our nation and Empire's extremity and peril to be our leader and deliverer."

The blessing was followed by the strains of the organ in Beethoven's Funeral March.

Then the Army stepped in so that London, Britain, and the Empire could pay the last tributes to its departed illustrious son. Eight stalwart troopers of the Royal Horse Guards took the coffin on their shoulders. They were followed by men who have written their names large in modern history—Marshals Foch and Pétain of France, the former particularly noticeable in his long blue coat and cap of gold and red; General Baron de Ceuninck of Belgium; and of our own nation, Admirals Jellicoe and Beatty, Generals Methuen, Cavan, Horne, Byng, Trenchard, and Ian Hamilton, who were the pall-bearers and bearers of the insignia.

The coffin, beflagged and adorned with the hat with its white cocks' feathers, gold baton, and sword, went slowly down the aisle above the bowed heads of the congregation into the view of the silent crowds awaiting its passing along the route to Westminster Abbey. A marked feature of the multitude of onlookers was the preponderance of men over women, members of that vast citizen army that Haig had led through years of

torture to final victory—men whom the spirit of the sorrowful, yet proud, occasion reanimated with a bearing that proclaimed their acquaintance with the profession of arms, no whit less than their medals, and in many cases their pain-lined faces or their crippled limbs.

In the pearl-grey light of a cold and cheerless morning between the leafless trees of Constitution Hill came the vanguard of cavalry of the mile-long procession. The way was led by three squadrons of the 17-21st Lancers—"The Death or Glory Boys"—with their red and white pennants flowing from their upright lances. Followed the khaki-clad 7th Hussars, to which the dead Field-Marshal was posted when he entered the Army in 1885. Behind them was a splash of colour in the scarlet plumes and glittering helmets of the Royal Horse Guards. Of the foot-soldiers the first contingent was the 14th London Regiment, the London Scottish, in hoden grey, kilts, white spats, and black bonnets; and the Territorials were followed by the King's Own Scottish Borderers, with khaki great-coats over their trews, and their Glengarries bound with a check of white and red.

Dirges were played by the massed bands of the Brigade of Guards. The colours of each battalion were heavily draped with black, held aloft by standard-bearers, accompanied by guards with fixed bayonets. There were black bearskins, sombre and sad, tunics of scarlet, and shining metal. The 1st Welch Guards were leading, followed by the 1st Coldstream, and the 3rd and 2nd Grenadiers.

In their rear came a small contingent of Belgian grenadiers in khaki-steel shrapnel helmets, khaki overcoats, and short leggings, holding their rifles with fixed bayonets stiffly to their sides; followed by a larger contingent of French soldiers with their grey-steel helmets, light-blue great-coats, and black haversacks.

From the Mall the procession turned into the Horse Guards



Parade, where are statues to three famous military leaders—Wolseley, Roberts, and Kitchener. The Horse Guards was the original headquarters of the War Office, which is now housed in a stately modern pile. It was the desire of the staff of the War Office that the procession should pass their department, which entailed passing through the Horse Guards Arch, that is as old as the reign of Charles II., when the standing army came into existence. For this the personal sanction of the King was necessary. The privilege was granted. Only one dead Field-Marshal, namely, the Duke of Cambridge, had ever been accorded that signal mark of royal favour.

Lady Haig had expressed the desire that in death, as in life, the "Soldiers' Friend" should be associated with the poppies of Flanders. Poppies were everywhere, splashing myriads of breasts with their vivid colour. There were poppies in a wreath from the King and Queen and in those sent by other members of the Royal Family. The King of Italy sent a wreath of poppies and laurel; and in honour of a departed aforetime foe the Hungarian military attaché also contributed a poppy tribute.

No crowd assembled for a funeral pageant was ever quite like this one that stood in almost an eerie silence, which was broken only by the steady tramp of slowly-marching feet that resembled the beat of a mighty drum.

In all this pageantry of pomp and power, preceded by the Army chaplains in their robes, there came the one particular unit, the almost abrupt sight of which caught the vast crowd by the throat.

The gun-carriage of "E" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, drawn by six horses and bearing the coffin, drew every eye like a magnet as it passed by. It was the vivid token of the great national loss, which made one realise from the demeanour of the serried silent watchers that, "a deep distress hath humanised the soul."

It was from the gun mounted on this carriage that was fired the first British shot in the war at Binche on August 22, 1914, and it would fire in this morning's salute. It was on this same carriage that the body of the Unknown Warrior was borne to its last resting-place. The gun and flag were lent for the occasion by the Imperial War Museum.

Walking seven on each side of the gun-carriage were the pall-bearers, and the bearers of the medals and insignia of Earl Haig, carried on black cushions. In ordinary circumstances their varied uniforms inevitably would have attracted the eye, whereas now the attention was arrested by the set faces of these comrades-in-arms who were evidently labouring under great emotion.

Touching in the extreme was the solitary riderless horse, that had borne the great Field-Marshal on the battle-fields of France, that had carried him through London streets in the Victory Procession, and was now ending his days in the Royal stables. Draped in black with a golden border, the Marshal's boots, reversed, in the stirrups, the charger was now led by a trooper of the 7th Hussars and a trooper of the 17th Lancers, preceded by Sergeant Secrett, who for thirty years had been Haig's devoted servant at home and abroad, in peace and in war.

A notable section of the procession consisted of the principal mourners headed by the representatives of the King, his three sons, the Prince of Wales in the full-dress uniform of Colonel of the Welch Guards, the Duke of York in Royal Air Force blue, and Prince Henry in Hussar uniform; Prince Arthur represented the Duke of Connaught. There followed relatives of Earl Haig, representatives of the Navy, Army, Royal Air Force, the Universities, and every important department of the national life. There succeeded a contingent of the British Legion in mufti, but wearing breastfuls of medals that were more eloquent than tunics, and carrying wreaths of Flanders poppies.

The rearguard of the procession was formed by a detachment from the 1st Battalion of the Irish Guards.

Among the array of uniforms and robes, it was unique to see the mace of the University of St. Andrews, that for the first time had been brought south of the Border. Earl Haig was Chancellor of the University, and the mace is the symbol of academic office.

As the procession passed the Cenotaph, each detachment saluted the memory of the fallen. Accidentally, but nevertheless appropriately, Earl Haig's coffin was halted for a moment exactly opposite the nation's shrine for the glorious dead. The flag which veiled the coffin was the first Union Jack that draped the Cenotaph. Now, as the gun-carriage moved forward again, the red, white, and blue folds fluttered in the gentle breeze. It might have been Haig's gesture to the spirits of the men who served and died under him. One could subconsciously imagine in that poignant moment, the legions of the dead were there in endless array to escort their great leader into the Valley of the Shadow. Their old commander had not died with them amid the roar and blood and agony of battle, but the war had killed him as surely as it had killed them.

Thus was the coffin of the illustrious soldier borne with befitting honour to the Abbey Church at Westminster, not for interment, but so that the chosen representatives of the nation could take their last farewell of one who had earned the highest regard of his day and generation.

The guards of honour mounted at the Abbey—Belgian, French, Navy, Irish Guards, Royal Air Force, and British Legion—were very impressive. Between the gates and the west door stood a special guard of honour from Earl Haig's own troop of khaki-clad Boy Scouts from Richmond, the boys whom the Field-Marshal had visited the day before his death. They stood rigidly at the Scouts' salute as the coffin passed into the Abbey.

Within the ancient fane there was a vast congregation, in which every department of the public life was represented—the Prime Minister, members of the Cabinet, and many members of both Houses of Parliament; the Lord Mayor and other City officials; representatives of the Navy and Army; the High Commissioners of the Dominion Governments; the Ambassadors of France, Belgium, America, Japan, Portugal, and Brazil; and the *Chargé d’Affaires* of Italy. Their splendid uniforms, together with those of representatives of other kingdoms and republics in every part of the world, the exotic attire of Indian potentates, the glitter of orders and decorations, the scarlet military uniforms slashed with gold lace, combined to form a picturesque medley of colour, pomp, and grandeur, backed by the greater number in more sombre garb, who represented the British nation at large, gathered together to pay sorrowful tribute to a chivalrous large-hearted Briton who had earned a mourning nation’s undying gratitude and love. The Countess Haig, with a solitary scarlet poppy on her black gown, was seated near the Sanctuary with her two daughters, Lady Alexandra and Lady Victoria Haig.

The assembled congregation, of whom nearly every one wore poppies, was stirred into expectancy by the sound of approaching military music, the wail of brass, the sobbing of drums, muffled by the thick walls, intimating the approach of the funeral cortège.

The pomp and pageantry were left outside the sacred pile. The coffin was brought in down the nave over the grave of the Unknown Warrior, and in front of the altar was placed on the catafalque with its six lighted candles of unbleached wax. Around it stood the pall-bearers, who had assisted Haig in the grimmest and longest-sustained fight the world had ever known. The Earl’s orders and decorations were laid down in line above the Communion steps.

The service was distinguished by its extreme simplicity;

there was no band within the walls, no beat of drum; no silver or brass instrument sounded a single note—until the end.

The sentences from the Order of Burial were sung by the choir unaccompanied; the 121st Psalm was chanted, the Lesson read, and the hymn, "Abide with me," was sung. Prayers were recited, including one for Our Gracious Sovereign and all the Brotherhood, living and departed, of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, of which Earl Haig was a Grand Commander; and a special prayer for "this Thy servant who, having fought a good fight, has finished his course in Thy faith and fear."

Then in the Chapel of the Kings behind the High Altar, the pipers of the London Scottish played "The Flowers of the Forest." The ill-top dirge rose and fell amid the arches, vaults, and pillars of the old-world mellowed shrine; it whispered in the dim roof; it mourned around the statues of men long dead; it sobbed over the tomb of the Unknown Warrior. From its first to its last note, the dirge gripped the hearts of all who heard this poignant breathing of a national grief, voiced in the music that was dear to the one it lamented.

The aged Primate blessed the vast congregation. There was a pause, and then into this service in which the warlike element appeared to have been almost studiously repressed, there broke in the distinctly military note in the Last Post. To many the piercing notes from the invisible buglers brought memories of a camp at night, the whinnies of the horse-lines, the lights winking out one by one, and tired soldiers falling to sleep. After another pause, there came the fresh crisp notes of the Réveill  , significant of the morning's crystal clarity and the beginning of a new day. The Last Post and Réveill   were the Army's farewell to a great leader who had won an imperishable name.

The National Anthem followed, and the service closed with the choir and congregation singing, "Onward, Christian

soldiers," Earl Haig's own favourite hymn, as the coffin was again lifted shoulder high, to begin the next stage in the journey of the dead Field-Marshal towards his far-distant final resting-place.

When one reflectively surveyed the great congregation, the thought arose of the millions who by means of the wonder-working "wireless" had shared in that notable religious service in London. To listeners-in in cities, great towns, remote villages, secluded hamlets, and even lonelier ships at sea, the modern telegraphic marvel had conveyed every broadcasted word and note as clearly as if they had been within the Abbey. No other dead Field-Marshal's obsequies were ever shared in by such a mighty multitude.

Outside the Abbey the coffin was replaced on the gun-carriage and the procession restarted. It was a much smaller cavalcade, for the unmounted troops, who took part in the earlier march, now lined the route to Waterloo Station. It was then that there came from St. James's Park the dull boom of a gun, one of the nineteen that were in final salute of the great Field-Marshal, reminiscent of the thousands of guns ceaselessly thundering on the battle fronts, where Haig had led Britain's legions to a hard-won victory that saved the Homeland and the Empire.

With the Abbey bells tolling, the guns from the Park booming, and the massed bands of the Brigade of Guards playing Chopin's solemn March, the procession crossed Westminster Bridge under the shadow of Big Ben on its way to the railway station. Upon its arrival there, nearly a hundred flags of blue and gold were raised in the air in unison and suddenly dipped to the ground by chosen banner-bearers of the British Legion. Thus was symbolised the homage to their dead leader of the absent millions who formed the war-time army.

At the entrance to the station the French had the privilege

of mounting the last military guard of honour. Where the gun-carriage came to a halt was posted Earl Haig's last London guard of honour, composed of old soldiers, all members of the Legion, and all wearing at least four medals.

As the coffin was borne to the waiting train, the Princes, the pall-bearers, distinguished military officers of many nations, representatives of the Corps Diplomatique, soldiers, sailors, and a few others privileged to witness the farewell ceremony, joined in a massed salute, which was maintained until the remains had been placed in the funeral coach on a bier covered with black crepe. In the same vehicle, whose walls were hung with crepe, were deposited the insignia, together with the Royal and many other wreaths that almost hid the coffin beneath its load of Flanders poppies. The coach was under the guard of a N.C.O. and eight men of the London Scottish, who accompanied the body to Scotland.

The signal was given, and the Princes and the distinguished party in their diverse uniforms again came rigidly to the salute until the train passed out of sight, on its way to a loop line that would give access to the main line of the London & North-Eastern Railway.

Earl Haig's last London parade was at an end.

## CHAPTER XI

### HE RESTS BY CHIMING TWEED

At the hour of midnight, under the pale light of the moon almost at the zenith, the remains of Earl Haig of Bemersyde were brought to St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, the city of his birth, in a manner too solemn and heart-moving for it to be easy to find a parallel.

St. Giles Cathedral has been the scene of many stirring events in Scottish history, among which may be mentioned: the interment of Regent Murray in 1570; James I. in 1596 chased out of the church to the Tolbooth, which led to his threat to "uproot Edinburgh and salt its site"; Jenny Geddes threw a chair at the Dean in leading the great protest against forcing the English liturgy on the Scottish Church in 1637; and in 1643 the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant.

In the last coming home of Earl Haig to his "ain folk," there was nothing stormy and stressful; but only a reverential calm and dignity, that must have made an unforgettable impression upon all those who shared in that soul-stirring midnight homage.

The funeral train from London glided into Princes Street terminus a few minutes after midnight, where it was received by General Sir William Peyton, G.O.C. Scottish Command, and members of his staff. To the sad music of "The Flowers of the Forest," the coffin was drawn from the coach and shouldered by eight non-commissioned officers of the 13th Field Brigade Royal Artillery, through the ranks of the Legionaries to the waiting six-horsed gun-carriage.



Headed by a squadron of Scots Greys, the "warrior's hearse" left the station, followed by an escort of London Scottish, the bearers, the pipe band of the 2nd Battalion the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, a solid body of the British Legion with another squadron of Scots Greys forming the rear-guard.

Against a clear moonlight sky, the Castle and the church spires were outlined in almost dreamlike beauty, forming a fitting setting for the simple cortège that wound round the Castle Rock and climbed the slope to the Old Town.

The route was lined by dense crowds of people who braved the bitter wind of a wintry night, and whose sea of faces was but dimly revealed in the ghostly light. Balconies and windows and every possible vantage point were crowded; even trees held their quota of spectators, and many were perched on ledges high on the Castle Rock. Subconsciously one thought of one of the dead Field-Marshal's predecessors in British arms, who was buried darkly at dead of night. The city was hushed, save for the muffled bells of St. Cuthbert's that echoed sweetly, marking time for the steady tramp, tramp of marching feet, and the rumbling wheels of the gun-carriage on which rested the flag-draped casket.

As the gun-carriage moved along with its beloved burden the moonlight caught the silver on the Field-Marshal's baton, giving the effect of a star twinkling over the coffin, reminding one of the poet's lines: "And in the night of death hope was a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of the wing."

Many thousands of people, most of whom wore the Haig poppy, were gathered around St. Giles Cathedral, before whose west entrance was drawn up the guard of honour of the British Legion from various branches in the area, under Captain Duncan MacNicol, who served in the Black Watch.

The Scots Greys, looking almost like phantom horsemen in the grey night light, swung into the square, heralding the gun-carriage that duly came to a halt at the doorway, where the

Very Rev. C. L. Warr, Dean of the Thistle, with the Cathedral clergy, awaited the body. As the coffin was raised by the bearers, the night air was pierced and the silence broken by a lament by the pipers.

The casket was borne into the shadowy interior of the Cathedral along the dimly lighted nave to the catafalque, the Dean of the Thistle reciting Scripture sentences from the burial service, beginning, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." Prayers were offered, and the Benediction closed the simple but deeply touching service.

General Peyton placed on the coffin a wreath from the Army in Scotland ; and members of the British Legion filed into the church and laid wreaths by the side of the bier.

The bearers and the clergy then withdrew ; the cathedral doors were closed ; and all that was mortal of Earl Haig was left in charge of Highland sentries.

Earl Haig's associations with Edinburgh were very intimate. It was his birthplace and, in his own words, where he "first went to school and spent many of the happiest of my early days." After the Boer War, he commanded the 17th Lancers, who for a time were quartered at Piershill Barracks. During the Great War the citizens watched Haig's career with pride, which they evinced with real Scottish fervour on May 28, 1919, when Sir Douglas Haig, as he then was, paid his first visit to the city, and drove through the streets as the victorious Commander-in-Chief of the British Army. He was the guest of Lord Atholl, the Lord High Commissioner, at Holyrood Palace. The University conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, and in the Usher Hall he received the Freedom of the city. On the following day, for the first time in the history of the Church of Scotland General Assembly, the "Fathers and brethren" were addressed by a British Field-Marshal in an eloquent speech in which he pleaded for an Imperial Church.

Earl Haig visited the Assembly in two subsequent years, and Mr. Robert Hope, R.S.A., painted the Field-Marshal addressing the Assembly.

In December, 1919, Earl Haig was again in Edinburgh, to receive a sword of honour from the Association of Lowland Scots, and the gold medal of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society; and a year later he was there to make an appeal on behalf of the disabled and unemployed ex-Service men.

In September, 1923, Earl Haig was in receipt of another honour in the shape of the unveiling of an equestrian statue on the Castle Esplanade, which was a gift to the city by an Indian admirer, Sir Dhunjibhoy Bomanji. The statue represents him as his army knew him on the field of battle, erect in bearing and with a determined expression on his clear-cut features. Near the end of 1925 Lord Haig, with Admiral Jellicoe by his side, headed an ex-soldiers' procession through the streets of the city, preparatory to a stirring appeal on behalf of the ex-Service men; and a year later in the Usher Hall in furtherance of the same cause.

Now the body of the dead Field-Marshal was lying in state in St. Giles Cathedral, under the tattered and hallowed colours of famous Scottish regiments, symbols of glorious achievements in the past. An unending queue formed outside the building during the hours it was open, and thousands passed before the coffin and the floral tributes that were receiving constant additions. Many wreaths had been brought from London, but the King and Queen sent a new one—a Scottish tribute in the form of a St. Andrew's Cross of red poppies, encircled by a chaplet of laurel leaves, and surmounted by a crown made of lilies. On either side of the chaplet were the letters G.R. in mimosa. The wreath was six feet high. One very simple but touching tribute consisted of a single poppy pinned on a sheet of white paper, reading, "From one of the Old Contemptibles." On either side of the coffin were wreaths from the dead Earl's

daughters, Lady Alexandra and Lady Victoria Haig, each inscribed, "To my darling Daddy."

In the stream of silent mourners every shade of life and calling was represented—rich and poor, old and young, hale and lame. Nearly every one wore a poppy, and a tiny girl, holding her mother's hand, had pinned a scarlet flower on the big doll she was hugging to her breast.

Every half-hour there was the impressive little ceremony of the changing of the guard of Highlanders, one of whom stood at each corner of the bier, resting on a rifle reversed, the military gesture of mourning. As the north door opened to admit a new guard, the feathers of the Field-Marshal's hat, lying on the coffin, fluttered gently in the breeze.

Countess Haig reached home on Saturday night, and told her young son of the death of his father. It was not deemed advisable to acquaint him earlier because he was recovering from an illness. He had been inquiring insistently for the Earl and now learnt why he had been unable to see him.

On Sunday, Countess Haig, accompanied by her two daughters, visited the Cathedral and placed a cross of red poppies on the coffin of her husband, that was then lying in the Chapel of the Thistle while the ordinary daily service was in progress.

On Saturday afternoon a company of the British Legion, 2,500 strong, with representatives from a number of regimental associations, entered the Cathedral and filed past the bier. Although this entailed holding up the queue, that was standing in a drenching rain, there was not a murmur against the Legion having priority in paying respect to their departed leader.

The first portion of the burial service proper was held in the Cathedral on Tuesday, February 7th, before a large civilian and military congregation. The choir in their purple cassocks issued from the vestry, preceded by the beadle, carrying his silver rod of office, that represents the Burning Bush, now veiled in black crepe. The choristers took up their station

on either side of the catafalque. Half-facing the congregation were the very notable figures of the *Rothesay Herald* and the *Carrick Pursuivant* in their gorgeous heraldic tabards. The Dean of the Thistle and Chapel Royal wore his Dean's badge, his war medals, and scarlet military cloak. The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was attired in the garb of his high office.

Passages from the burial service were read by the Assistant Chaplain-General to the Forces in Scotland; the 23rd Psalm was sung; and the lesson from the 7th chapter of the Revelation was read by the Rev. Professor Duncan, of St. Andrews University, who was chaplain to Earl Haig at General Headquarters in France. "Onward, Christian Soldiers" was sung; the Dean of the Thistle offered prayer; and the service came to an end with the Benediction, pronounced by the Right Rev. Dr. Norman Maclean.

Before the last notes of the service had died away, the military bearers shouldered the coffin, and bore it out of the Cathedral to the gun-carriage standing in the light of the wintry sun. Meantime the pipers of the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders played a lament, and the troops in the vicinity stood at the salute.

Scots Greys headed the procession; the Cameron Highlanders followed, carrying their rifles at the reverse. The gun-carriage was escorted by a detachment of the King's Own Scottish Borderers. Next came a party of ex-Service men, carrying a number of wreaths. The Royal wreaths were carried by men from the Royal Horse Guards, 7th Hussars, 17-21st Lancers, King's Own Scottish Borderers, Seaforth Highlanders, and Royal Scots Fusiliers. The chief mourners and the Cathedral clergy were next in order, followed by General Sir William Peyton, accompanied by many members of his staff. Behind them were the National Executive of the British Legion in Scotland, and a guard of honour composed

of officers and men of all regiments with which Earl Haig was associated. Finally there were representatives of the British Legion—Men's and Women's sections—members of still more regimental associations, brought up with a platoon of Cameron Highlanders as rear-guard.

The slowly moving procession was watched by an immense concourse of people with solemn music in their ears, the wailing of the pipes, the throbbing of drums, the blare of brass. The Castle again made a notable background to a picture that few will ever forget. As the cavalcade passed the Scott monument, the white figure seemed to have an air of watching the passing of the great man who was to share the poet's own resting-place in Dryburgh Abbey.

The cortège entered Waverley Station to the strains of "The Battle's o'er." The coffin was transferred from the gun-carriage to the coach in the funeral train, before which the British Legion formed the guard of honour. It was an emotional moment as the train started: the gun salute was booming from the Castle ramparts; and the Camerons band was playing the Chopin "Funeral March."

Earl Haig, the great leader in war and in peace, "with banner and with music, with soldier and with priest," was leaving the city of his birth for the last time.

In London and Edinburgh great masses of the people had shown their respect to the dead in a series of wonderful ceremonies. Now during the railway journey to St. Boswells there was another rather touching exhibition of the very real affection that Earl Haig had inspired in all classes in every corner of the land. All along the line, in towns and villages, and where the railway crossed country roads, people gathered together to join in a homage that was truly national. Even the bleak and lonely countryside, on which there were patches of snow, was not without mourners, men with bared heads and women and children with their heads bent; and then their

eyes followed the train until it was out of sight. Here there was no military display, no music—only a fleeting train; yet these lonely scattered testimonies of mourning were not an iota less touching than the more spectacular ceremonies that had made a memorable panorama of splendour and power.

At St. Boswells the pipers of the 4th Battalion of K.O.S.B. (Territorials), garbed in the grey Buccleuch tartan, played a lament while the coffin was brought out of the railway coach to be placed on a simple farm cart, drawn by two tandem horses; a second cart carried the King's wreath; and a third vehicle contained the wreaths from the Prince of Wales, near relatives, and the British Legion.

Five miles of narrow country roads now had to be traversed through old St. Boswells and Mertoun, where Earl Haig worshipped at the Parish Church. The procession was headed by nearly seven hundred men of the Border British Legion. Next came the Rev. Professor Duncan, war chaplain to Field-Marshal Haig, who was joined at Mertoun by the Rev. J. F. M'Creath, minister of the parish; both were in their robes and both were bareheaded. The pipers and bearers preceded the coffin, which was escorted by the Bemersyde employées. Behind the third cart came relatives and personal friends of Earl Haig; General Peyton and two members of his staff; officers of the King's Own Scottish Borderers; followed by a large number of British Legionaries from many parts of Scotland. Among those who walked at least part of the distance on foot were many Scottish nobles, among whom were the Duke of Buccleuch, the Duke of Roxburghe, the Earl of Ellesmere, the Earl of Elgin, the Earl of Dalkeith, the Earl of Haddington, the Earl of Minto, and others.

About half a mile from the Abbey, Countess Haig and her two daughters attached themselves to the relatives behind the third cart. Sergeant Secrett also joined the procession.

Dryburgh Abbey is a beautiful old ruined shrine that

dates back eight centuries. Its weather-worn walls, aisles, and arches are open to the sky. Set amid ancient yews and cedars, it is one of the most beautiful ruins among the many that are scattered over the Scottish Borderland. From it is afforded "the most moving view of Tweed, as if the Creator's hand had composed a landscape to surpass all else in Borderland."

Once when talking to the Rev. J. F. M'Creath, Earl Haig asked the minister where he would bury him when he had gone. The minister replied that the only one place was St. Paul's Cathedral among Britain's great military heroes. Earl Haig, smilingly shaking his head, and pointing to the burial ground of the Haigs, near the tomb of Sir Walter Scott, said, "There is where I will be buried." It was not surprising that he chose to be laid to rest among his forbears in such a beautiful spot, "sweetened by the music of the chiming Tweed."

At Dryburgh Abbey the coming of the funeral procession was awaited by thousands, among whom were Lord Provost Stevenson, the civic head of Edinburgh, and other city officials; Colonel Stanley of H.M. Bodyguard, representing the personal staff of the late Field-Marshal the Earl of Ypres; and many others distinguished in Church and State, and in the administration of the Border country.

With the westering sun momentarily bursting through the grey clouds, the procession came to the Abbey. The flag-draped coffin was borne on a low carriage to the grave, around which stood the chief mourners, Lady Haig and her daughters being a little in advance of the pall-bearers—Colonel Oliver Haig; Major William Haig, D.S.O.; Colonel A. P. Haig; Colonel Depree; Colonel Robert Haig; and Lieut.-Colonel Sir Wolseley Haig.

The Rev. J. F. M'Creath recited the Scripture lesson, and as the last words, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord," were uttered, the coffin was lowered into the poppy-lined grave. The committal prayer was followed by the singing



of "Onward, Christian Soldiers," started by the choir of Border singers, but the great concourse took up the martial melody in a wave of sound, to the accompaniment of the stormy wind surging through the trees.

The Rev. Professor Duncan pronounced the Benediction ; the pipes gave forth a sad lament ; the Last Post rang out, followed by the stirring call of the Réveillé.

Thus ended a most memorable funeral of a great soldier who had inscribed his name indelibly on the scroll of fame. He was accorded all the pomp and circumstance and melancholy grandeur to which his high military rank and his undying achievements entitled him ; but at the end he was laid to rest, not as a military leader of world-wide fame, but as the Laird of Bemersyde, a simple-mannered British gentleman. Far from the roar of the city camps of men, he rests in a soil hallowed by history and literature ; he lies among those of his own kith and kin, in a romantic spot around which the great Field-Marshal's heart strings were entwined.

Sir Walter Scott, who was interred in the Abbey nearly a hundred years ago, in the "Lady of the Lake," sang what now seems to have been almost a prophetic welcome :

"Soldier rest, thy warfare o'er,  
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,  
Dream of battled fields no more,  
Days of danger ; nights of waking."

## CHAPTER XII

### THE WORLD'S TRIBUTE

THE announcement of the death of Earl Haig sent a whisper of regret throughout Britain and the whole Empire, and at the same time there were other nations whom his removal struck with a consciousness of acute personal loss. Earl Haig was monumentally British ; but by his incomparable devotion to duty, his military talent, his conscience supreme, and his chivalry and magnanimity, he had made a deep impression on other peoples ; and thus his death drew forth almost innumerable heart-felt condolences from every corner of the civilised world.

The following excerpts from tributes of sincere appreciation have been chosen to demonstrate some characteristic of the dead Field-Marshal, or to illustrate some feature in the great military campaign that was the epic of his life. The statements are typical of the many that were inspired by intimate knowledge, and a great thankfulness that in the time of direst need there arose a great Captain whose spirit of sacrifice and valour brought a healing touch to the nations in travail.

#### ROYAL SYMPATHY.

#### Court Circular.

SANDRINGHAM, Norfolk.

The King has learned with profound sorrow of the death of Field-Marshal Earl Haig, who will for all time be remem-

bered as the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's victorious armies in the field.

The King knows that the sudden and irreparable loss of this valuable life will be deeply felt throughout the whole Empire, by the Army, and more especially by Lord Haig's old comrades, to whose welfare he had devoted himself since the close of the Great War.

His Majesty also expressed his sympathy with Lady Haig in a telegram, and the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal Family sent similar condolences.

#### THE ARMY'S TRIBUTE.

A telegram was despatched to Countess Haig by General Sir George Milne, Chief of the Imperial Staff :

On behalf of the Army, the Army Council tender to you and your family their most profound sympathy in the irreparable loss you have sustained by the death of your distinguished husband, who was loved and trusted by all the Armies of the British Empire which he led to victory in the Great War.

The following Army Order was issued :

The Army Council, on the melancholy occasion of the death of Field-Marshal the Earl Haig, K.T., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., D.C.L., LL.D., Colonel, Royal Horse Guards, 17-21st Lancers, and King's Own Scottish Borderers, desire to place on record their sense of the heavy loss which the Army and the Empire have sustained. The late Field-Marshal had already served in many campaigns with great distinction, and had held high appointments where he had had opportunities of training troops whom he subsequently commanded in the Great War.

As Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders, he bore throughout four long years the heaviest burden which has ever been carried by a British soldier in the history of the Empire. He led the forces of the Empire to victory, and placed his countrymen under a debt of gratitude which is fully acknowledged now, and will, the Council are persuaded, be no less fully recognised by succeeding generations.

Always studious of the welfare of the troops under his command in the field, since the war he devoted without stint his time and great energy to promoting the interests of those who had risked their employment, their health, and their lives in the service of the King. He has left to the Army an imperishable memory, and to the Empire a glorious example.

#### THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

The Marquis of Salisbury, in paying a tribute to the late Earl Haig in the House of Lords, said :

“ He was a great leader who led this country to victory in the greatest war there ever had been. The issues were so vast ; the public feeling was so deeply stirred ; sorrow was so profoundly felt ; victory was so great. And what must be thought of the man who was the centre of it all—the commander in the field, the man most responsible ? They might, indeed, wonder at the balanced judgment and iron nerve which a man must have to carry so great a weight of responsibility. In one respect the position of Lord Haig was different and more difficult than that of any other great commander, because of the vastness of the force which it was his duty to control and the complexity of the operations which necessarily prevented him from that personal contact with soldiers in the field, upon which great commanders in the past had relied to inspire their armies to achieve their purpose. If they turned from him as a commander in the field, they recognised that he was a man of great sympathy which led him

to safeguard those who had suffered and were ruined, and to protect them as far as he could in the years that followed. He had a gentleness of manner, and an unfailing courtesy which was so often the note of great men of action."

Viscount Haldane of Cloan, who was Secretary of State for War in the critical years 1905-12, joined in the tribute. He said :

"Lord Haig was a thinker of a very high order. When he went into battle it was upon a plan strategically conceived and based on far-reaching objectives. That was the tone and temper of his mind. It is not too much to say that it was to Haig, more than to probably any other, that the efficiency of the British Army when it had to take the field, as it had to do, suddenly in 1914, was due.

"He has passed from us, and those who knew him, who knew the modesty of his character and the clearness of his mind, who realised the inflexible resolution that lay at the back of his judgment, mourn him. They mourn him because such personalities are not easily produced again. And yet I feel myself that he has left behind him a tradition which the British Army will not readily lay down, and I think that the manifestation of feeling all over the country in the last few days has been an illustration of how the British democracy—perhaps not understanding very much, but yet with a fine instinct for the truth—recognised in Haig one of its greatest soldiers. In conception of the objects of a battle, in clear ideas of how to use his troops, I doubt whether there has been anybody since the great Marlborough who was his equal. He may not have been one of those magnetic personalities who inspire troops, as two or three great generals of our own have been in our own time, but I end by saying what I said at the beginning : he was a great military thinker, so great that only those who had to live through years, as I had, in the closest contact with him can realise how great he was."

## THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

In the House of Commons it was resolved to present an humble Address, praying that His Majesty would give directions for a monument to be erected at the public charge to the memory of the late Field-Marshal Earl Haig. In the course of his remarks, that frequently elicited cheers, Mr. Baldwin, the Prime Minister, said :

“It is no part of my duty, nor is it, I think, the part of a layman’s, nor do I think has the time come upon anyone’s part, to attempt a military appreciation of the services of Lord Haig. I will content myself with saying that by common consent he was one of the great figures of the war. The ultimate place of any soldier, as of any statesman, can never be decided in the lifetime of the generation to which he belongs. But I will hazard this prediction—that the fame of Lord Haig will grow as the years go by.

“I can speak of his character, because of character contemporaries can judge. There may be much on which the future will throw its light, but by universal consent his countrymen recognised in him, above all, three things that they always value most in men : Steadfastness ; absolute and complete integrity, a man to whom a mean thought or a mean action was impossible ; and thirdly, loyalty to everyone with whom he served—loyalty to all in the Army, from the highest to the lowest, and, what is more difficult, loyalty to the civil governing power. I say without contradiction that in cases where Lord Haig had to follow orders from the Government, even in cases where he could not fully agree, once he gave his word to follow those orders he did so with never a thought and never a word or action except absolute loyalty to the duty that lay before him.

“Perhaps one of the most remarkable things about him was the way in which immediately the war ended he effaced himself. He was a man who entered into no controversy. There was no article of any kind, no book justifying himself or attacking others.

He knew that no man could be his own advocate before posterity. That character was the secret of his strength, and I know from talks I have had with men that that humble personal life of his made itself felt all through the British Army incalculably, and was no small factor in the morale of those great forces.

"And in his death how happy! No failing of his powers, mental or physical, but called away in the plenitude of his strength. Never could there be a truer instance of those well-known lines that must have occurred to many of us :

Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail  
Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt,  
Dispraise or blame, nothing but well and fair,  
And what may quiet us in a death so noble."

Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald said :

"I wish most sincerely and whole-heartedly to associate myself with the very beautiful and moving words in memory of Earl Haig which have been pronounced by the Prime Minister. To some of us war is such a terrible calamity that the man whose name is associated with it tends unfortunately, very unfortunately, to become the symbol of battles, of bloodshed, and of slaughter, and as a consequence we view the names of these great soldiers in a false perspective, and our judgments regarding them are apt to lack both penetration and balance.

"Very fortunately, however, the later years of the life of the late Field-Marshal Lord Haig revealed the whole man to us all. When the war ceased and peace had been proclaimed, loaded with dignities and honours and wreathed in fame, he retired unobtrusively from the public stage on which he had been a central figure. He did not retire to a life of leisured ease, but his activities since that time were ceaseless, one might say illimitable. No ex-soldier, no widow of a dead soldier, no orphan of a soldier had dropped a tear without that tear finding its way to Lord Haig's heart. His activities were devoted to alleviating the lot of his old comrades, the men whom he had led and whose

welfare he never dissociated from his own. All the splendid loyalties he had displayed as a commander found a new outlet in this succouring work.

"To-day we bow at the passing of one who but little beyond the prime of his life has been suddenly removed by death—a very happy end, as the Prime Minister has said. He fought many battles, but none more noble than this last battle in the cause of suffering humanity which fitly closed a soldier's life. Thereby he has gained something more precious than military fame, a place of honour, of respect and companionship in the hearts of many grateful people."

Major J. B. Cohen, M.P. for the Fairfield Division of Liverpool, who lost both his legs during the War, said :

"As honorary treasurer of the British Legion and their spokesman in this House, it is right that I should say a few words on this occasion. The British Legion was formed in 1921 by an amalgamation of all ex-Servicemen's organisations and Lord Haig was made their president. He seemed to live only for it, and for those who were supported by it. He presided at many meetings; he attended the annual conference of the Legion every year; and he led them each year past the Cenotaph at their annual ceremony there.

"The Legion was Lord Haig; Lord Haig was the Legion. One was an autocrat and the other a democracy. Democracies are difficult things to control, and it is possible that a democrat would not be able to do it. Lord Haig was an autocrat and carried every one who followed him. I think myself—and I am speaking for the Legion—that it is essential that a statue to his memory should be erected. It is necessary that it should be somewhere in London, so that it could be used as a shrine or an altar where we and our children and their children's children may pay homage each year."



Many public men, on learning of the death of Earl Haig, expressed their heartfelt regret and voiced their appreciation of his services to the country.

#### THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

"I knew him. I was his guest in France. I was able to see the spirit with which he went through that great campaign. Nothing impressed me more than the way in which with imperturbable devotion to duty he stood apart from all political movements and controversies and simply stuck with noble gallantry to the task he had been set to do. That is the spirit which in life's controversies I hope we shall always maintain."

#### MR. LLOYD GEORGE,

The War Minister during the most fateful years, thus recorded :

"Earl Haig was a man of unfailing courage and tenacity of purpose, and he never lost heart during the worst moments in our military fortunes. One certainly had to admire the way in which after the war he fought the cause of the men who stood by him in France through his work for ex-Service men.

"My personal relations with him were always of the very best, and whatever arrangements were made, whether he liked them or not, he very faithfully carried out the policy that had been laid down. Especially did he show that quality when we decided upon unity of command and the British Army was placed under the control of Marshal Foch. Whatever might have been his personal views upon the matter, he carried out honourably every particular of the understanding that was arrived at. He behaved not merely like a great patriot but like a great gentleman."

#### MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL.

An eloquent tribute was issued from the Treasury :

"Mr. Churchill expresses his profound sorrow at this sudden and grievous loss. He had known the Field-Marshal since the beginning of the century, and had greatly admired him. He was incomparably the finest British soldier of this fateful age. His calm unwearied strength of mind and singleness of spirit enabled him to endure all the hidden stresses of the war, and to render service to the State beyond the power of any other man. These same classic qualities preserved a noble dignity amid the rewards and unaccustomed pleasures of victorious peace. He never spoke a word but for his comrades. His end was swift, like a soldier's on the battlefield, and its cause no doubt originated there. His memory will live and grow with the grandeur of the events amid which he strove and over which in the end he ruled."

#### LORD BIRKENHEAD.

Lord Birkenhead, speaking at Hull, said Earl Haig directed the war to its glorious conclusion by a blend of qualities, some of which depended upon his military intuition and even more upon his force of character.

Chief among his qualities were tenacity, firmness, calmness, courage, and imperturbability, which were possessed by Lord Haig in a degree which had not been exceeded by any British General, not even by the Duke of Wellington.

Britain must acclaim with mourning the death of one who for all time would be accounted as one of the conquering Generals of England.

The great audience which Lord Birkenhead addressed in the City Hall stood in silence as a tribute of respect to the late Field-Marshal.

#### GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON.

Sir Ian Hamilton saw service with Haig in the South African War. He has since held many distinguished appointments; and put the seal upon his fame by his dauntless

leadership in Gallipoli. Greatly moved on hearing of the death of his old comrade, he said :

“Haig was never the man to parade his anguish of mind, either when, under his orders, men were falling by thousands—or afterwards. He always held his head high and never stooped nor faltered for a moment under the burden of world-wide responsibility endured for years. He preferred people to think he had not done anything special. For this reason he was pleased with a remark made to him not long ago by Il Duce : ‘I had imagined,’ said Mussolini, ‘I was going to see a careworn old gentleman come creeping into the room, and now, instead, I find an alert and vigorous young soldier.’ Haig repeated the remark, not because his vanity was tickled—he had none, absolutely none. No—but because he felt his appearance was helping him to keep up his assumption that he had been through nothing in particular.”

#### THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH LEGION.

Col. G. R. Crosfield said : “By the death of our President, Field-Marshal Earl Haig, the British Legion has suffered an irreparable loss. Lord Haig was mainly responsible for the formation of the Legion, insisting that ex-Service men must pull together for the common cause. He refused any honour for himself until pensions had been raised to a level commensurate with the cost of living, and it is true to say that ever since the War his life had been devoted to the cause of assisting ex-Service men, widows, and orphans.

“His loss will be deplored by every member of the Legion, and, indeed, by the whole of the ex-Service community. His memory will be a lasting inspiration to us all to carry on his work for comradeship, unity and peace, ideals which he always insisted should be the mainspring of the Legion, and which he knew would bring the Legion into that high position for which it is destined.”

## THE BRITISH PRESS

The newspapers of the country teemed with references to the death of Earl Haig, sufficient in themselves to make a notable volume of well-deserved eulogy. One regrets that the exigencies of space will permit but a few of the newspapers being quoted, and even in their case only under a severe course of condensation.

*THE TIMES*

## A LEADER IN WAR AND IN PEACE

"Wherever the flag flies the British people share the 'profound sorrow' of their King for the leader under whom they bore it to victory in the greatest of all wars. Lord Haig's name will live for all time as that of the commander of all the forces of the Empire on the Western Front from the close of 1915 to the end of the War. He was never perturbed by danger however imminent, by mishaps or disappointments however unexpected, by responsibilities however grave.

"Scotland will always be able to boast that the Commander-in-Chief of the British Armies for most of the Great War, like other of the most distinguished generals, was one of her sons, and perhaps from his Scottish blood he drew the dogged tenacity which enabled him to bear up unmoved against all the misfortunes which had to be endured and overcome before the victory.

"One of the truest and most fitting appreciations of his worth comes from the distinguished South African soldier and statesman who knew him as an enemy in the Boer War and as a comrade in the great conflict for the freedom of the world. 'All honour to him,' says General Smuts, 'great soldier and greater gentleman. He has left a record of qualities and work of which the British people may justly be proud.' That in a few words

is the best of epitaphs for Haig. His fellow-subjects throughout the Empire honour him as a great soldier, but it is as a very great and noble gentleman that they have given him love as well as honour."

### *THE DAILY TELEGRAPH*

#### THE PASSING OF A GREAT SOLDIER

"A great British captain has died in Earl Haig, whose name will be held in grateful admiration by the generations, older and younger alike, which lived through the Great War. We owe to Haig—with others, of course, but more especially to him—the training of the Regular Army in the crucial years between the South African War and 1914, which forged the Expeditionary Force that first met and withstood the shock of the German Armies and saved the Channel Ports. As Commander of the First Army he was Lord French's right-hand man, and was summoned at the end of 1915 to take his place. Fortunately it was for the Allies that Haig was of the temperament which alone could have sustained a Commander-in-Chief through the trying and testing years which followed.

"It is not as if the mighty machine which advanced so majestically with the force of Destiny behind it in the late summer of 1918 was there waiting and ready to be used at any moment in 1915, 1916, or 1917. It had to be created while it was being used; the secrets of the methods of successful warfare in the new conditions of the Western Front had to be learnt by bitter, and sometimes by appalling, failure, and all the time Haig was confronting the mightiest military engine known to history.

"Haig, like many another British soldier who has risen to distinction, was singularly undemonstrative. He had the strength of those who possess their souls in patience and are calmest in adversity. He kept faith; and loyal to all his obligations, did not deem the account to be closed on the day of victory. He will be most truly mourned to-day among his humblest comrades during the Great War, to whose cause he pledged himself after

the Armistice. Among his many unfading laurels it is not the least—that he never let the British nation forget that it owed to the private soldier a debt it could never repay ”

### *THE DAILY MAIL*

#### LORD HAIG AND HIS GREATNESS

“Napoleon said of one of his own most famous generals that he excelled because in him character and attainments were perfectly balanced, many soldiers having one or other but few combining both in a high degree. The same might have been said of Haig with perfect truth. He was an earnest student of his profession, but above all he was steadfast and firm in his character.

“No soldier in history has gained such a series of victories over perfectly led, admirably equipped and courageous troops as he won in the battle of the Hundred Days, which ended the war and lifted the fame of his country so high. He trusted his troops and he trusted himself ; and, as the world knows, the Hindenburg Line was triumphantly carried and 36,500 German prisoners taken, the largest total in any single battle on the Western Front.

“Without question, one of his old comrades spoke the truth when he said that this ‘great leader’s calm judgment, coolness in adversity, unselfish patience when unsupported at home, and bold decisions when the time came, were vital factors in our triumph.’ The British Empire may well mourn the loss of that valiant and faithful servant who yesterday entered upon his eternal rest.”

### *THE DAILY EXPRESS*

#### THE PARADOX OF EARL HAIG

“It was the paradox of Earl Haig’s career that his figure grew greater as the war receded. For three years he commanded the

largest British Armies in the history of the Empire at the most searching crisis of that Empire's existence. During a great part of those terrible years, at the very centre of the most spectacular events, he remained himself so little spectacular that his personality was almost unknown. Psychologically he was scarcely felt in the Army until his famous 'backs to the wall' message in the spring of 1918, when the Germans had hurled back the Allied front, revealed him as a fighter of Wellingtonian tenacity. Then there passed through the shattered forces that revivifying thrill which is the fruit and the proof of leadership, the thrill that made men do the impossible, rally and re-form when all seemed lost, and bore them to one of the decisive victories in world-history.

"But Earl Haig seemed only to grow to his full stature when the war was over. Then, in the depth and practicality of his sympathies for all who had served under him, and in his unceasing labours on their behalf, his countrymen realised the great-heartedness and the plain human magnetism that had been hidden from them by the fog of war. He displayed an unbounded belief in the capacity of the nation to carry into the years of peace the same qualities of resolution and camaraderie that had made it triumphant in war."

## *THE DAILY CHRONICLE*

### AN UNSELFISH LEADER

"Lord Haig will be mourned to-day by the nation and the Empire as the foremost figure in those great armies, whose long effort and agony carried us unconquered through the ordeal of the War. From its beginning to its end he was engaged on the main Western fronts, commanding first a corps, then an army, then the largest group of British Armies in the world or in history. An incomparably vaster number of British and Dominion soldiers served under him than had ever before served under any man of our race and language.

"His fine freedom from personal vanity, with his strong sense of duty and of military comradeship, contributed enormously both to make possible and to make successful the final unity of the Allied commands under Marshal Foch. This was one of the very greatest services that any Allied officer rendered. The same qualities made him always keenly and loyally conscious of his debt to the men who served under him.

"Thus it was that when the War was over and our triumph secure, the one use which Lord Haig made of the great personal position which he had reached, was to throw all his weight into the task of helping the ex-Service men. Nothing did him more honour than his devoted work for the British Legion. He never confined himself for a moment to accepting a mere titular position at its head; his keenness was untiring in its cause. Such an attitude toward those whom they had commanded has not always marked the great commanders of history. But in Lord Haig's case it was typical of the man—a man whom millions served under, whom but few knew personally, but who worthily symbolised throughout to them all a common effort, a common loyalty, and the victory of a common cause."

## *THE MORNING POST*

### THE HAPPY WARRIOR

"Field-Marshal Earl Haig, as he was well prepared, and never feared, to die, would no doubt have wished that death should come, as it has come to him, suddenly. He was besides, in his own famous words, "tired," because he had "held out the longest"; he took no rest in the war because he knew that it lay on him to save his country; he chose to take no rest after the war because his magnanimous heart felt for himself not at all, but only for the men who had fought under him. He had the pitiful nature of the Happy Warrior.

As more exposed to suffering and distress :  
Thence also more alive to tenderness.



And so he never ceased up to the moment of his death to fight the good fight for the men who had fought for him.

"It is a tribute to the depth of his study of war and the versatility of his mind that he should have succeeded in the conduct of a war in all respects as different from his South African campaign as the burrowing of a mole is different from the flight of a hawk. In the one moment of the old warfare that he enjoyed, the First Battle of Ypres, he rallied his men in the gallant personal way of the Knight of Chivalry ; but his real greatness lay in the quick and ready adaptation of his mind to the new and gigantic problem of trench warfare on a scale and under conditions never before seen in the whole history of war—nations in arms taking to earth and hurling at each other forms of death hardly known before even to the chemist and the engineer."

## *THE DAILY NEWS*

### THE PASSING OF EARL HAIG

"Even President Hindenburg is reported to have been deeply moved when he heard of the sudden death of Earl Haig. That is not a matter for surprise. Haig was a man whose character, still more than his abilities as a soldier, commanded universal respect. He was the embodiment of all the manly virtues ; he did his duty faithfully and well in the most responsible position ever entrusted to a British General and in circumstances of terrifying difficulty ; and, after the war, when field-marshal and admirals and statesmen of all nations were tumbling indecently over one another into print in order to deprecate their rivals or to glorify themselves, Haig, in spite of numberless provocations, preserved a dignified silence.

"The two outstanding achievements to Haig's credit in his career as Commander-in-Chief were his instant acquiescence in the appointment of Foch as Generalissimo in the last year ; and the sheer courage with which he persisted in his final plan of campaign—first resisted and then accepted by Foch—in face of

the obvious reluctance and distrust of the British Government at home and in the certain knowledge that in the event of failure he would be utterly disgraced. In the unswerving pursuance of that plan it was the British Army, under Haig, which played the leading part in bringing the war to a miraculously triumphant conclusion."

## THE SCOTSMAN

### THE LATE EARL HAIG

"In the sudden death of Field-Marshal Earl Haig the Empire has lost one of its most distinguished figures, and Scotland one of its most famous sons. He was known, so far as he was known to the public at all, when the war broke out, as a dashing cavalry officer, a lieutenant of Sir John French's in the South African War. But the war of position that resulted after the retreat to the Marne and the subsequent pursuit to the Aisne, in which operations he took a brilliant part, left little scope for the mounted arm, and the struggle became one of technical adaptation and tactical skill. These were qualities which were highly developed in the new Commander-in-Chief, more so, perhaps, than strategic resource. He reorganised the remnants of the Old Army, blended them with the Territorials and the new Armies, and fashioned out of the combination a fighting force which has never been excelled.

"It would be idle to attempt to compare Earl Haig with the great military captains of the past. The very magnitude of the struggle and of the issues at stake submerged individuals, and prevented that personal touch between Generals and the men they led which was possible in previous wars. When it is recalled that Earl Haig saw more fighting in a single month and commanded more British troops in a single day than did Wellington in the whole of his career, it may be appreciated how vastly different are the conditions of modern war. But even so, the personality of the Commander-in-Chief counts for much, and the Empire

has every reason for thanksgiving that in Earl Haig was found a resolute and capable leader, who endured to the end and won for himself and his men imperishable renown."

## *THE SOUTH WALES ARGUS*

### REMEMBERED AND VENERATED

"Most people regarded Field-Marshal Earl Haig as one of the institutions of the country. But Death has laid its cold finger upon him, and his work is done. He will be remembered and venerated as much for what he has done since the war as for what he did during that great and terrible struggle. Thousands of ex-soldiers buffeted by the stormy waters of life, striving almost in vain to get a footing on a hostile coast, driven forward and battered against the rocks, pulled back into the deep by the backwash of the war, think with gratitude of the rope flung to them by the British Legion of which Earl Haig was the head, and have accepted with gratitude the aid which this institution has been able to give them; while millions of good-hearted folks are glad to know that through Earl Haig's Poppy Day they have been able to give aid, in proportion to their capacity, to men physically or economically broken by the war.

"Most men would like to be remembered chiefly for their constructive work, and we believe that Earl Haig will be remembered chiefly for his association with the British Legion, for the picturesque and symbolic appeal of Poppy Day, for help given to broken men, and for the encouragement of comradeship among the old soldiers."

## *THE IRISH TIMES*

### AN EMPIRE LOSS

"Courage, simplicity and common-sense—these qualities account for much of the Empire's debt to Lord Haig, but not for

all, or even for the greatest part of it. No man of his time, soldier or statesman, excelled him in magnanimity; no other general ever was more devoted to his men, and, perhaps, none save Napoleon had a greater measure of his men's trust. His love of the men whom he led to suffering and death and finally to victory was not merely the regard of a keen soldier for good material: it was a real passion, compounded of admiration for their splendid qualities and of a profoundly human sympathy with their needs. It may be that in the divine book of accounts his work after the Great War bulks at least as largely as his work for the Allied cause. To-day tens of thousands of ex-Service men owe renewed health and the means of a decent livelihood to his insistence upon their country's debt to them. The King's Roll, the British Legion, the institution of 'Poppy Day,' which in six years raised £1,700,000 for men broke in the war, are monuments to his memory, as noble in their way as the bursting of the Hindenburg Line. By Lord Haig's death the Irish ex-service men have lost their greatest leader in war and their best friend in peace."

#### THE BRITISH DOMINIONS BEYOND THE SEAS.

The death of Earl Haig touched the Empire to an intense degree, especially because he was the great leader under whom fought an immense army that consisted of Empire's sons of every race, creed, and colour, all brothers-in-arms under the Union Jack, which is the "Flag of the Free," and the emblem of the power and might of the British Empire.

From India, Field-Marshal Sir William Birdwood sent the following message to Lady Haig:

"On behalf of myself and the whole of the Army in India I wish to express our very deepest sympathy with you in the great loss you have sustained by the death of your husband, our revered Field-Marshal. I know what the loss means to you, a loss which is shared not only by Great Britain but by the whole British Empire, while every soldier and ex-soldier feels that one who was a real friend to all has left us."

The Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mackenzie King) sent a cable to Lady Haig on behalf of the Government and people of Canada, expressing sympathy and regret at the death of Earl Haig.

The Minister of National Defence (Mr. Ralston) sent a message to the Secretary for War, expressing deep regret on behalf of the Defence Forces of Canada.

General Sir Arthur Currie, who commanded the Canadian Corps in France, said :

“Earl Haig typified all the qualities implied by the phrase ‘a soldier and a gentleman.’ His association with the Canadian Corps was long and close and a genuine mutual regard bound him to all Canadians in France. More than once he honoured us by selecting us for special trusts and great tasks. My own relations with him were most pleasant and I could always look to him for the most sincere co-operation. The esteem he won in war grew in peace and in him every ex-soldier has lost a friend.”

Mr. Bruce, the Federal Prime Minister of Australia, in expressing the national sense of bereavement, said :

“Few men were entrusted with such tremendous responsibility as Earl Haig during the most critical days of the war, and few men enjoyed such a degree of implicit confidence in the hour of trial.”

Mr. Hughes, the famous War Premier of the Commonwealth, said :

“A great figure who occupied the world’s stage has passed away. Millions of men in the armies of the Empire, who in their hearts looked upon him as their chief and leader, mourn the loss, not only of a great General, but of a great man and a fine character who never lost heart in the darkest days. The whole Empire mourns for him.”

Mr. Coates, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, said :

“Earl Haig will go down to history not only as a fine soldier and a gallant gentleman, but also as one who, amid untold irritations and distractions, always preserved bonhomie with his colleagues and kept his eye fixed with high hope upon the ultimate victory. His greatest claim to the respect and admiration of the British people lay in his unfaltering loyalty to the welfare of the plain Tommy.”

*The Cape Argus* published a striking article from the pen of General Smuts, South Africa's war leader, who was the late Earl's foe in battle at the beginning of the century, but in the Great War rendered noble service for the Empire. He said :

“I was shocked to hear of the sudden passing away of Earl Haig. In him passes away one of the foremost actors on the great stage of the history of our time. He was as simple as he was great and distinguished.

“I first got to know him in 1902 during the Anglo-Boer War, and formed the highest opinion of him, both as soldier and gentleman.

“When the Great War came, he speedily rose to the top, and he was the only Supreme Commander on any front who retained his high position right through to the end of the war.

“He was criticised for sacrificing his men on a colossal scale in the awful struggle of 1917, but his critics forget that in those dreadful autumn months of 1917 the whole weight of the war had fallen on him and the British Army.

“Haig stood in the breach like a rock, he drew to himself the entire attention of the enemy, and pinned them down to his front. His losses were colossal, but they saved the situation. His nerve and staunchness saved the Allies.

“The great strokes which finally smashed the German Army

were his, but for himself he was prepared to accord the pride of place to Foch. All honour to him—a great soldier and greater gentleman.”

#### FRENCH HOMAGE.

The following telegram was sent by M. Paul Painlevé, the French War Minister, to the British War Office :

“ I learn with the deepest emotion of the sudden death of that great Chief of the British Armies during the war, Field-Marshal Haig. His name is as popular in France as in Britain. Our Army offers its homage in recognition of the great qualities which he showed in his glorious mission, and realises the part which he played in the common victory. Having worked with him during many months and through difficult times, I feel deeply the loss which England has suffered, and I offer to the British Army, in the name of the French Army and myself, the expression of my profound sympathy.”

Marshal Foch, on learning of Earl Haig's death, said :

“ It is with very profound regret that I learn of the sudden death of my old comrade, Earl Haig. To me he was always an excellent brother-in-arms, very loyal, very true, and very straight. I always appreciated his great friendship, his knowledge of military affairs, and the splendid manner in which he handled the British troops. He showed his great attachment to the soldiers who had served under him by the creation of the Earl Haig Fund, for which he worked hard. His death will be a great loss to the British Empire, of which he was the most loyal servant.”

From M. Clemenceau, France's War Prime Minister, who is 86 :

“ I am most grieved to hear of the death of Earl Haig. I met him many times during the most fateful hours of the war, when

great decisions had to be taken. I always found him a true British gentleman and a truly great war leader.

"I was always profoundly struck by his sincerity, his loyalty, and his devotion to duty. The dealings I had with him when I was Premier and Minister of War, whether I met him during my visits to the front or at Councils of War when the fate of our two countries was hanging in the balance, were always most smooth and most cordial.

"Always he placed the interests of his country and the Allies above all personal considerations.

"I remember the pleasure I experienced when in August, 1918, on the proposal of Marshal Foch, I pinned on his breast the French Military Medal, the highest honour that can be bestowed on any army commander."

#### BELGIUM'S REMEMBRANCE.

M. Henri Jaspar, Prime Minister of Belgium, sent the following message to the Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin :

"Deeply moved by the death of Earl Haig, I beg your Excellency to accept my sincere condolences. The loss of the illustrious Marshal does not only affect the British Empire. It is profoundly felt by all my compatriots, who treasure the memory of the incomparable services rendered by him to our common cause."

M. Hymans, the Foreign Minister, sent the following telegram to Baron de Cartier de Marchienne, the Belgian Ambassador :

"The news of the death of Field-Marshal Earl Haig has profoundly affected Belgium. The Belgian Government, interpreting the feelings of the country, which will never forget the eminent part played by the glorious British Commander-in-Chief in the victory of the Allied Armies, beg you to present its deep condolences to the British Government."



## AMERICAN SYMPATHY.

The following telegram was sent from the United States to the British Government by Mr. Kellog, Secretary of State :

“May I express to you and, through you, to the bereaved family of the British people the deep sense of loss experienced by the Government and people of the United States in learning of the death of Field-Marshal Earl Haig. The American people have grateful recollections of the splendid spirit of unity which subsisted between Field-Marshal Haig’s forces and the American troops during the World War, and sympathise most deeply with the British nation at this time.”

General Pershing, who commanded the American troops in France, said :

“We became fast friends during the world-war, and our relations were always most pleasant and harmonious. He was generous, fair-minded, and frank, and his word was a sacred thing. In the darkest hours he never faltered. No man ever served his country’s cause with a more sincere devotion. He was a fine gentleman, an accomplished soldier of the highest type, and, above all, a great commander-in-chief.”

The foregoing extracts from sheaves of material must serve for the whole, that sums up a world of homage paid to one who represented in the highest degree the unshakable constancy and unaggressiveness of a noble military chief.

## LADY HAIG’S THANKS

## HER MESSAGE TO THE LEGION

Mr. Baldwin in his speech in the House of Commons said he did not think the things Earl Haig stood for could be

summed up more beautifully than in the last sentence of the remarkable letter from Lady Haig.

The letter was one of thanks for the messages of sympathy she had received on the death of her husband, Field-Marshal Earl Haig. It ran :

I wish to express to all who, since my dear husband's unexpected death, have shown in so many ways their respect and affection for him, and their deep sympathy with my family and me, my very grateful thanks.

I have received so many messages from all over the world that I cannot hope to reply to them all just now. But I have myself opened and read every one. They have filled me with a sense of pride in the love which my husband was able to inspire in his fellow-countrymen and women, which lightens the burden of my grief as nothing else could do.

Especially do I wish to thank all members of the British Legion, men and women, for their kind messages, and for the magnificent proof of their affection and esteem for their lost leader afforded by their disciplined and sorrowing ranks.

It was by his expressed wish that my husband has been laid to rest in Scottish soil, close to the home of his fathers. His wish alone was my reason for refusing on his behalf the great honour of burial in St. Paul's Cathedral. I feel that no one who knew his love for the land that bore him will grudge him the realisation of his desire.

I thank from my heart all those who sent wreaths and flowers . . . Particularly do I thank them for having chosen as emblem of their mourning that same Flanders Poppy which is sacred to the memory of those old comrades whose ranks he has rejoined.

To the members of the British Legion I would give, besides my thanks, a message which is in truth my husband's message, for by it he lived and died. Carry on with the work of the Legion. Hold fast to the objectives embodied in its charter. The work

so well begun is not yet ended. Carry it on steadfastly as did my husband, seeking till life's very end the ideals he sought to teach.

May his memory inspire us to follow his example and to cherish as faithfully as he did the same simple, true and honest virtues—good will, good fellowship, good citizenship, loyalty to King and Country, patriotism, pride in the high traditions of our race and land, and above all, comradeship.”

DOROTHY HAIG.

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